ANIMADVERSIONS

UPON THE 4427.85.

ANTISYNODALIA AMERICANA,

A TREATISE Printed in *Old England*;

In the Name of the

DISSENTING BRETHREN

In the SYNOD held at *Boſton* in *New England* 1662.

Tending to Clear the ELDERS and CHURCHES of *New England* from thoſe Evils and Declinings charged upon many of them in the two Prefaces before the ſaid Book.

Together with

AN ANSVVER

UNTO

The Reaſons alledged for the Opinion of the Diſſenters.

And a REPLY to ſuch Anſwers as are given to the Arguments of the SYNOD.

By JOHN ALLIN, *Paſtor of the Church of Chriſt at* Dedham *in* N. England.

Rom. 3. 1, 2. *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of Circumciſion? Much every way: chiefly, becauſe that unto them were committed the Oracles of God.*

Gal. 3. 27, 28. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither Bond nor Free, there is neither Male nor Female, for ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Heb. 12. 15, 16. *Looking diligently, leſt any man fail of the grace of God, leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Leſt there be any fornicator, or profane perſon, as Eſau, who for a morſel of meat ſold his Birthright.*

Cambridge: Printed by *S. G.* and *M. J.* for *Hezekiah Uſher* of *Boſton*. 1 6 6 4.

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THE PREFACE TO THE *READER.*

SUch is the Infirmity and Corruption of Man, the Malice and Subtilty of Satan the Enemy of Truth, Purity, and Peace, and the holy and juſt Diſpenſation of God Permitting and Ordering all things to his moſt glorious Ends; that frequent Experience ſheweth how hard it is for a People deſirous to walk in all the wayes of God, to ſteer a right courſe between the Gulf of Profaning the Ordinances by an over-looſe Diſpenſation thereof, on the one hand; and the Rocks of Rigid Separation, Anabaptiſm, and the like, on the other hand.

And hence it may ſeem the leſs ſtrange, that (notwithſtanding the Eminent Lights we have had, holding forth The Covenant-intereſt of the Church-ſeed, *and* The Duty of Churches to improve the Ordinances for their good*) yet the Practice hereof hath not obtained in many of our Churches.*

That this Caſe is now become matter of publick Diſpute between the late Synod, *and ſome* Diſſenting Brethren; *though it be cauſe of Humiliation, yet we deſire herein to ſubmit to the onely wiſe God, hoping and waiting upon Him to ſee the Improvement thereof for good, and for the further clearing up unto us what is* His good, perfect, and acceptable Will *in this caſe.*

When theſe Antiſynodalia *of our Brethren came to our hands, and* Another Eſſay *of the ſame nature was here Publiſhed, ſome godly and wiſe Chriſtians adviſed the* Elders *to let them paſs in ſilence; conceiving that they would not ſo take with the People, as to hinder the Practice of* the Doctrine of the Synod: *and that a* Reply *would occaſion further Diſputes and Conteſts. But, upon ſerious conſideration of the matter by divers* Elders *met to that End, the* Reaſons *on the other ſide did preponderate. Such as theſe:*

1. We being perſwaded of the Doctrine of the Synod, and not finding any Weight in thoſe Tractates to change our Judgements, it ſeemed to us, that by ſilence we ſhould be ſinfully wanting to the Truth of God, (a preſent Truth that many godly ones are enquiring into) and to the Juſt Intereſt of the Church-ſeed.

2. This Truth being aſſerted in ſo Solemn an Ordinance, *viz.* The Aſſembly of the Elders, and other Meſſengers of ſo many Churches, after ſolemn ſeeking the Face of God, and much ſearch into the Scriptures, with large Diſputes about the ſame; Our ſilence in this caſe would not onely render that Ordinance uſeleſs and vain at preſent, but alſo diſcourage the Churches in after-times to make uſe thereof for their neceſſary Eſtabliſhment in Truth and Peace.

3. We ſee evidently, that the Principles of our Diſſenting Brethren give great Advantages to the *Antipædobaptiſts*, which if we be ſilent, will tend much to their Encouragement and Encreaſe, to the Hazard of our Churches.

4. Theſe Treatiſes coming into the Peoples hands, if no Anſwer ſhould be returned, will much ſtrengthen the hands of ſuch as are Diſſenters, and diſcourage the hearts of others from the Practice of the Doctrine of the Synod, for the good of Poſterity.

5. Thoſe unjuſt Aſperſions caſt upon many of the Elders and Churches of *New-England* in the two Prefaces to the *Antiſynodalia*, do tend much to weaken the Authority of their Miniſtry and Diſpenſations, and would lay them under much Scandal in *Old-England* and *New*, ſhould not a juſt Apologie and Anſwer be made thereunto.

For theſe and the like Reaſons, it was thought neceſſary to return a juſt Anſwer to theſe Books, publiſhed in Oppoſition to the Doctrine of the Synod. *But that my Brethren ſhould have any eye upon my ſelf to undertake this part of the Work;* viz. *To Examine, and make Reply to theſe* Antiſynodalia, *was very farre from my thoughts. Yet when I could by no Perſwaſions and Intreaties prevail with them, to*

Call

Call out ſome other more able for this Work (whereof we had choyce) I conſidered, that the Spirits of the Prophets are ſubject to the Prophets, *and that the Lord is not wont to deny Aſſiſtance to ſuch as he calleth forth to any Service; yea, that He delighteth to* ſhew His ſtrength in weakneſs: *In hope hereof, I have by his Grace and Help run through theſe* Antiſynodalia, *in my plain and homely manner (loving alwayes to ſpeak to vulgar Capacities) wiſhing heartily it had been done by ſome better hand, that might have performed it more throughly. This onely I have to ſay for my ſelf, That I have not willingly declined any ſeeming ſtrength of Reaſon, nor ſought by Shifts and Evaſions to darken any ſeeming Light of Truth held forth in theſe* Antiſynodalia; *but have Candidly (according to my meaſure)* Searched the Scripture whether thoſe things were ſo. *As I have believed, ſo have I ſpoken: As I finde in the* Law and Teſtimony, *ſo have I written. What weakneſſes and defects may be diſcovered by a more judicious Eye, I hope (through Grace) I ſhall be willing to ſee and reform upon intimation thereof; onely let no Truth herein held forth, be the leſs eſteemed for the Infirmity of the Inſtrument.*

I ſhall commit this Caſe of the Church-ſeed *unto that God, who of his rich Grace hath undertaken to be their God; Beſeeching Him to make his Wayes plain before the face of his People, and to improve theſe Diſputes to common Edification, according to the good pleaſure of his will.*

Thine in the Lord,

JOHN ALLIN.

From my Study in *Dedham* in N.E. 6 day, 11 mon. 1663.

Cotton, Philips — p. 12. Parker, 13.
God's answere in sending Rain p. 15.
Baptised Indians 46. may yet need fur-
further preparation to ye Lord's Super.
Gen. 49. 26. p. 55.
Ch Covenant is ye ground of ye dispensation of
Ye Seals 62.
New-Jerusalem 71.
Baptism in Rome 79.

ANIMADVERSIONS
UPON THE
ANTISYNODALIA AMERICANA.

CHAP. I.

Being Animadverſions upon the two Prefaces: *The firſt*, To the Reader; *the ſecond*, To the Honoured General Court.

IT is no good ſign, that the Publiſher of theſe *Anti-Synodalia* doth ſo foully ſtumble at the Threſhold, in his firſt ſtepping forth into this Buſineſs. For whereas he pretendeth, "*As a Lover of the Truth, to Publiſh this* "*Treatiſe without any Commiſſion from the Diſſenting Bre-* "*thren, which he deſireth them not to be offended with:* and affirms it as a truth, "*That the perſons engaged in this Diſſent, had much rather* "*this Treatiſe were ſuppreſſed, and as an untimely birth to have been* "*buried in everlaſting darkneſs.* The contrary hereunto is evidently evinced by the whole Preface following; which ſpeaketh no more in the perſon of the Publiſher, but of the Diſſenters: and wherein they endeavour to Anſwer four Objections againſt the Publiſhing thereof. And in Anſwer to the firſt Objection, taken from the *Ill conſequences that might follow*, they declare a Reſolution to have it Publiſhed, whatever ſhould follow; concluding in the words of *Eſther*, *If I periſh, I periſh.* Beſides, it is well known here, how

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earneſt and reſolute one of the chief of them was to have it Publiſhed.

Concerning the Objections here mentioned: The three firſt, from *The ſad Conſequences that may follow; The trouble of the Peace of the Churches hereby;* and from *The Novelty of their Opinion*; I know not of any that made theſe Objections: Surely that language was not heard in the Synod, but their own Reaſon might object ſuch things. The fourth Objection is, A pretended *Concurrence of all other Congregational Churches they know of, to countenance their Cauſe*, but without any ſufficient Proof thereof. But ſeeing it is now Publiſhed, though *unſeaſonably*, (as is confeſſed) I ſhall not trouble my ſelf and the Reader about the Anſwers to the *Objections*, but apply my ſelf to wipe off thoſe uncharitable and unjuſt Aſperſions that in this Preface are caſt upon many of the Elders and Churches of *New-England*. Wherein (that I may not wrong any of our beloved Brethren, the Diſſenters) I muſt ſay this on their behalf, That ſome of them do profeſs that they had no hand in this firſt Preface, nor in the Publiſhing thereof, nor any knowledge thereof: And I have reaſon to think ſo of others of them, who I hope have other thoughts of their Brethren, then this Preface holdeth forth. So that ſo farre as I conceive, it is the act of one of them onely, or chiefly.

I take notice of Seven Imputations caſt upon us, which I ſhall ſpeak unto.

1. The Author of this Preface complaineth of "*The courſe Entertainment of their Tenent, both in the Synod, and in the General Court, where they expected more Patrons then did appear.*

Anſ. That none may hence judge otherwiſe then the truth is; In reſpect of the Synod, it cannot be denied that the matter in queſtion was placidly, fully, and oft-over Debated, all their Arguments weighed, all Writings preſented were read, conſidered, and ſome publickly anſwered: So that all the *courſe Entertainment* was, that their Tenent was not embraced by the Synod. And as for the Honoured General Court, if they were ſo farre ſatisfied with the Anſwers of the Synod to that Queſtion about *The Subject of Baptiſm* propounded by them, that they did not think fit in their Wiſdome

to

to countenance and encourage a Party riſing up in Oppoſition thereto, as tending to Diviſions and Diſturbances amongſt us; they may thank themſelves for ſuch *courſe Entertainment*, if they will ſo account of it.

But to aggravate this *courſe Entertainment*, he addeth, "*Though* "*it be no other Doctrine then of all the Congregational Churches in* "Holland, England, Ireland, *and* New-England, *and alſo in* New- "Haven, *and* Plimouth *Juriſdictions*; *yea, and alſo that it hath been* "*the Judgement and general Practice of the Churches in the* Bay, *ſome* "*few inconſiderable excepted, for thirty years.*

Anſ. Here is a great Pretence of *general Concurrence* with their Tenent, but without Proof, and beyond the truth. And to make the Number ſeem the greater, beſides *New-England*, he addeth, *And alſo* New-Haven, Plimouth, *&c.* as if theſe were not *New-England* Churches. As for thoſe Forreign Churches, it doth not appear whether as yet (many of them at leaſt) have declared their Judgement in this caſe. Yea, I have heard from one of good note, that knows many of thoſe Churches, who upon the queſtion anſwered, *That this caſe hath not as yet been conſidered in many of thoſe Churches.* And if their Practice have not yet ſuited to the *Doctrine of the Synod*, we know by our own experience how many hindrances there may be of that, though their Judgement be for it. But concerning the Judgement of *New-England* Elders and Churches, let the Preface to the Synod be read, by which it will appear, That the moſt Eminent Elders in the moſt conſiderable Churches, and the Meſſengers of the Churches of *New-England*, were generally for this Doctrine in the Synod held at *Cambridge* in the year 1648. I ſhall mention onely that Paſſage of famous *Hooker*, *whoſe praiſe is in the Goſpel in all the Churches*, and who might know as much of the Principles of the Congregational Churches as another: *It is not the queſtion* (ſaith he) *Whether wicked Members, while they are ſinfully tolerated in the Church, they and their ſeed may partake of Priviledges; for this is beyond queſtion: nor do I know, or ever heard it denied by any of ours.* Survey, Part 3. Chap. 2. pag. 11. Whereby it doth appear, that he took it for a general Confeſſion on all hands, That it is the Intereſt in the Outward Covenant that

giveth right to Outward Priviledges of the Church; which is the Foundation of the Doctrine of the Synod. Whereas the Tenent of our Diſſenting Brethren is, *That Members of the Church admitted in minority, and having the Covenant ſealed by Baptiſm, if being adult, they hold not forth ſaving Faith and Repentance to the judgement of the Church, even ſo as to come into full Communion; neither they nor their ſeed may partake of Priviledges, they are* Felones de ſe, *Self-murtherers, Diſcovenanted of God, and are not ſo much as Fœderally holy, ſo ſoon as they be out of their Non-age*; as will appear after: which Tenent I cannot believe will be owned by moſt of the Churches named, if by any of them.

This Author addeth further, "*That yet now this Tenent is laden* "*with Reproaches of Antichriſtianiſm and Anabaptiſm.*

Anſ. If an Argument or two were uſed in the Synod, taken from ſuch Conſequences, is this ground enough to ſay *it is laden with ſuch Reproaches?* (and other ground I know none.) Yet for that of *Anabaptiſm*, it will appear the Principles of the Diſſenters are ſo near a Kin, if not the ſame with theirs, that we cannot but fear a great tendency thereunto: and what encouragement they take from thence, we are very ſenſible.

Secondly, In anſwering the firſt Objection, this Preſacer takes occaſion, upon ſuppoſition of the Doctrine of the Synod, to charge "*the Bay Churches with a ſin which he cannot ſee how it can ſtand with* "*peace of Conſcience, in leaving their former practice in diſpenſing the* "*Seals, and taking up a new manner thereof; yea a grievous ſin, in* "*depriving ſo many Infants of Baptiſm for thirty years; yea, of the* "*ſame nature, and ſomewhat worſe then that of the Phariſees,* Luke 7. "29,30. *diſannulling the counſel of God againſt themſelves, and ſo many* "*hundred poor Infants whom the Kingdome of God (as we now plead)* "*belongs unto: and a practical Anabaptiſm.*

Anſ. 1. It is indeed a grief of heart to many Elders and Brethren, that the practice of the Rule, according to the Doctrine of the late Synod, cannot yet obtain in their Churches; but they are not convinced *it is a ſin in them that cannot ſtand with peace of Conſcience*, as the caſe ſtandeth: becauſe *all things* in the Church *muſt be done to edification*; which in this caſe cannot be put in practice, eſpecially in

in reference to the fifth Propoſition, with peace and edification, by reaſon of the ſtrong oppoſition made by theſe, and other like Diſſenters When this matter was under Conſideration in the Synod 1648. the Author of this Preface knoweth well who it was that profeſſed, *He would oppoſe it with all his might:* by reaſon whereof, and the Diſſent of ſome few more, it was laid aſide at that time. It ſeemeth to me very hard dealing, for Brethren ſo ſtrongly to oppoſe others in doing their Duty, and then to charge them with *a ſin that cannot ſtand with peace of Conſcience* if they do it not. The caſe ſtanding thus, let the Reader judge who are more like the Phariſees, *that rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves, in not being baptized of John*, whether ſuch as would practice according to their Judgement, or ſuch as oppoſe and hinder them from ſo doing.

2. This Neglect is not ſo great for thirty years, as is Objected: for, in the former years of theſe Plantations, till the Church-ſeed were grown up to Marry, and have Children, there was not ſuch need of practice according to the fifth Propoſition (which is now moſt ſtumbled at;) beſides, ſome Churches have been in that practice for divers years.

3. There is *no falling from our former practice*, as is Objected, our Principles are the ſame; this is onely a progreſs in practiſing according thereunto, as the encreaſe of the Churches doth require. It is the way of Chriſt in the Goſpel, to ſet up the practice of his Inſtitutions as the neceſſities of the people call for them, as appeareth *Matth.* 9.36, *&c.* with 10. 1, *&c.* So *Acts* 6. 1. *&* 14.23. 1 *Cor.* 16.1,2.

4. When Circumciſion, by reaſon of the travels in the Wilderneſs, was omitted forty years, and the Feaſt of Tabernacles from the dayes of *Joſhua* to the dayes of *Nehemiah*, was neglected ſo many hundreds of years, we do not reade of ſo deep a charge laid upon the Elders and People by any of the Prophets of God.

Thirdly, We are charged with " *A greater ſin to be trembled at,* " viz. *That we admitted all ſorts that were perſonally in Covenant to* " *the Lords Supper, which now we deny to many, except after Covenant-* " *ing they make it manifeſt, that they are able to examine themſelves, and* " *diſcern the Lords Body: If this be regular, then the other is irregular,*

" *and brought guiltineſs to many of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, and* " *was eating and drinking judgement to our ſelves.*

Anſ. This is a very heavy Imputation laid upon ſo many Elders and Churches, and without any colour of Reaſon: For, what matter is it whether Elders and Churches be ſatisfied of the fitneſs of their Members for the Lords Supper, before their admittance into the Church, by the Elders examination of them; or at their admittance by their publick Profeſſions (which is known to be our conſtant care and practice) or afterward? but becauſe we do it not after Covenanting in perſons received in adult age, as well as in perſons received in infancy, that therefore we are ſo deeply guilty; this is a groſs and irregular Charge. Some have objected againſt our admiſſions, as over-ſtrict; but who hath charged us with ſuch *a ſin to be trembled at* in ſuch a manner, as *to bring guiltineſs upon many of the Body and Blood of Chriſt?* And it is ſtrange to ſee ſuch as make ſo loud a Profeſſion of *ſtedfaſtneſs in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel*, to lay ſo great a Scandal of *a ſin to be trembled at*, upon ſo many Elders, before conviction thereof, and their impenitency therein, and that in the face of *Old England* and *New*, ſo contrary to the principal and expreſs Rules of Goſpel-order, *Matth.* 18 15, 16. 1 *Tim.*5.19.

Fourthly, In the Anſwer to the ſecond Objection, *viz.* " *That* " *by Publiſhing this Treatiſe they ſhall diſturb the peace*, &c. The Author pleading poſſeſſion of another manner of diſpenſing the Ordinances, and that *bought at a great rate, The loſs of Native Land, Fathers Houſes*, &c. he ſaith, " *That the diſturbers of the peace, the* " *troublers of* Iſrael, *are thoſe that would rob them of their poſſeſſion, or* " *queſtion their right, eſpecially having enjoyed them ſo long before this* " *pleaded-for Converſion of* New England.

Anſ. 1. But did we indeed come to *New England* to put our Poſterity under the wings of Gods gracious Covenant and Ordinances, and then to deny them and their ſeed the Benefits thereof? to leave them at a looſe end without the Diſcipline of Chriſt, the Means to prevent ſin, or to reduce them to Repentance unto life? Certainly, the Profeſſion of very many gracious and ſerious hearts, and their hopes for their Children, was farre otherwiſe. Yea, of

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theſe that now Diſſent amongſt us, ſome I know, and many more I may ſuppoſe left *Old England* for the good of their ſeed in this reſpect.

2. Are not our Children in poſſeſſion of the Houſe, Members of the Church, by the confeſſion of the Diſſenters? The Synod pleadeth onely *that they may enjoy the Priviledges of the Houſe*; it is the Diſſenters therefore *that would rob them of their poſſeſſion, and diſturb the peace.*

3. The Synod (as appeareth in their Preface) doth leave them to their liberty to practiſe according to their Judgement: If they will not own, or Baptize ſuch as in the fifth Propoſition are deſcribed; if they will have their Children accounted *Self-murtherers, Diſcovenanted of God, if the Lord have not wrought Faith and Repentance viſibly in them when they come to adult age*, there is none that offereth to diſturb their poſſeſſion in theſe things. And why then ſhould they diſturb and oppoſe the Right and Poſſeſſion of ſo many others who aſſert the Rights of the Church-ſeed, which are in Covenant with God, in poſſeſſion of the Houſe, whoſe *advantage* (the Apoſtle ſaith) *and profit is much every way?* Rom. 3. 1, 2.

Fifthly, In Anſwer to the third Objection, *viz.* "*That they* "*are Innovators*; and *that the moſt learned Miniſters were of the Sy-* "*nods minde.* This Author of the Preface granting this to be true of *Some*, (which is a *large Some*, as is manifeſt in the Preface to the Synod) he muſt needs caſt a double Aſperſion upon the Elders, affirming,

1. "*That as many of them are ſo large in Judgement, as to ſoulder* "*with Pariſh Churches.*

Anſ. If this be meant in reſpect of Communion with Orthodox Pariſh Churches, we are no larger then our Diſſenting Brethren, who concur with us in the ſeventh Propoſition about the firſt Queſtion, which ſpeaks to this caſe. But if it be meant of *inlarging the Church to the Bounds of a Pariſh*, it is a meer Slander: I do not believe that he can prove that any two Elders of theſe Churches have ſo declared their Judgement; much leſs ſo many as are of the Synods minde. It lieth upon the Author to make good this charge, or to recant his raſhneſs.

2. He affirmeth, "*That the general Judgement of the learned El-*
"*ders, and their Practice, was as the Diſſenters plead; but now divers*
"*of thoſe Elders do retreat and recant.*

To prove this, he alledgeth two Paſſages out of *An Anſwer to Thirty two Queſtions*, Printed 1639. But thoſe Paſſages are too weak to bear up this Aſſertion; yea, do evidence the quite contrary.

The firſt is taken out of *Page* 22. of the ſaid Book; the ſum whereof is this, "*That ſuch whoſe Parents are not Believers and*
"*ſanctified, are not fœderally holy; Fœderal Holineſs or Sanctity being*
"*limited to the next Parents*, 1 Cor.7.14.

Anſ. 1. This Paſſage doth not agree with the Diſſenters; for it doth appear, that the Author doth account Fœderal Holineſs to be Sanctity: and therefore the next parents being in Covenant with God, and ſo continuing, they are Eccleſiaſtically holy, ſanctified, and viſible Believers.

2. Do not the ſame Elders in this Synod deliver the very ſame Doctrine, in the *ſecond Propoſition*, and *fifth particular*, viz. *It is requiſite to the Memberſhip of Children, that the next Parents, one or both, be in Covenant?* Citing the ſame Text, 1 *Cor.*7.14. And where then is the leaſt ſhew of Recanting?

The ſecond Proof is *Page* 23. of the ſaid Book, where it is ſaid, that "*We believe that all Members of Churches ought to be Saints, and*
"*faithful in Chriſt Jeſus, none excepted*, Epheſ. 1. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 2.
"Phil. 1. 1:

Anſ. 1. This paſſage ſpeaketh of Members to be admitted in adult age, and therefore might be as well alledged to prove a conſent with the Anabaptiſts, as with the Diſſenters; which was farre from the meaning of that Author. Beſides, though they ought to be ſo, yet that denieth not, but being regularly admitted, they are ſtill Members of the Church, till they be regularly caſt out, though they do not approve themſelves to be ſuch.

2. Do not thoſe Elders profeſs the ſame Doctrine in the Synod, *Propoſ.* 2. viz *Members of the viſible Church, according to Scripture, are Confederate viſible Believers?* alledging the ſame Texts, *Eph.* 1. 1, *&c.* Where then is this Recantation?

Sixthly, The Author of this Preface excuſing *the Paucity of the Diſſenters,*

Diſſenters, in compariſon of the many able, learned, and godly Magiſtrates and Miniſters that conſented; He objecteth three things againſt the Synod conſenting.

1. "*That divers of the Elders having Preached and Practiſed that* "*Doctrine of late years, were pre-engaged: and it is ſtrange that after* "*Vows they ſhould be called to enquire.*

Anſ. Were not *Paul*, *Barnabas*, and others, as much engaged in the Doctrine of that Synod *Acts* 15? and did they come *after Vows to enquire?* 2. Were not the Diſſenters as much pre-engaged in their Opinion? why then did they come *after Vows to enquire?*

2. It is Objected, "*That divers Meſſengers being no Logicians to* "*anſwer Syllogiſms, and diſcern Ambiguities, were over-born by the* "*many Oppoſers.*

Anſ. It is incongruous and too high to make the Body of the Synod the *Oppoſers*, which more fitly agree to th few Diſſenters. 2. Though divers were not ſuch Logicians, yet Charity might allow the choyce Members of our Churches to be able to judge of Arguments drawn from the Scriptures; and ſo farre conſcientious, as that diſcerning the Voice of Chriſt, they would not be born down with number of Oppoſers. To ſay nothing of the Logick of the Diſſenters, that might be as little as the others.

3. It is Objected, "*That the corruption of man moſt inclineth to* "*walk in the broadeſt way, though the ſtraiter way be never ſo clear;* "*eſpecially when perſons eminent in Place, Power, Learning and Piety,* "*are ſo linked together?*

Anſ. Be it ſo, that there is ſuch a corruption in man; yet when ſuch perſons (as the Synod are confeſſed to be) agree in one, and that in ſo Solemn an Ordinance of God, where Chriſt hath promiſed his Preſence; *Charity, that hopeth all things*, might well conceive that Grace would prevail above ſuch a Corruption. 2. If our Brother be not aware of it, I can aſſure him that there is alſo a Corruption in man, and in good men too, under the notion of *Strictneſs and Zeal*, to ſwerve as much to the other Extreme: As when the Diſciples would have *kept little children from Chriſt*, Mark 10.13,14. When out of zeal againſt the *Turcs*, men would hazard

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to *pluck up the Wheat alſo*, Matth.13.28,29. So when we are *apt to judge others, whom God hath received*, Rom.14.3. which I wiſh our Brother ſeriouſly to conſider. The way of the Anabaptiſts is a *ſtraiter way*, yet I ſuppoſe this Brother doth not judge it *his corruption*, to chuſe a way ſomewhat larger. So is the way of the *Seekers* and others, who think their ſtraiter wayes as clear as our Brother thinketh of his.

Seventhly, In *Page* 5. this Brother anſwering another Objection, "*That this Diſcourſe may ſeem needleſs, ſeeing all other Congregational Churches agree with them, that they know of*; alledging the *Savoy Meeting*, Chap.29. Of Baptiſm 4. "*Yet*, ſaith he, *there needs abundant confirmation: for no doubt this temptation will ſpread further, when more then the third part of the Stars of Heaven here are ſwept down, as is Propheſied* Rev.12. &c. *Furthermore*, (ſaith he) *let the world know, That the Lord hath ſtill a few Names in* New-England *who hold faſt his Name, and are ſtedfaſt in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel, and deteſt the Abominations of Antichriſt.*

Anſ. 1. This Author glorieth much in the *Conſent of other Churches*. We ſee here his ground, which I ſhall examine. The Poſition of that Meeting of the Churches, is this: *Not onely thoſe that do actually profeſs Faith in, and Obedience unto Chriſt; but alſo the Infants of one or both believing Parents, are to be Baptized, and thoſe onely.* We can well conſent with this Doctrine, without any prejudice to the Doctrine of the Synod: For we profeſs and prove in the Synod, That the children of the Church being in Covenant with God, owned by him as holy, as his People, his Children, and manifeſting their continuance in the Covenant, according to the fifth Propoſition, theſe are viſible Believers in Eccleſiaſtical account, in Scripture account, 1 *Cor.*1.1. with 7.14. And I cannot believe but that Reverend and Learned Aſſembly would acknowledge *Regular Church-members to be viſible Believers:* And it doth appear, that theſe are Regular Church-members in their judgement, by their *Second Poſition, Concerning the Church*, Chap.26. where they ſay, *All ſuch as profeſs the Faith of the Goſpel, and Obedience to God by Chriſt according to it, not deſtroying their Profeſſion by Errours*

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everting the Foundation, or unholineſs of Converſation, are Members of the viſible Church. Now it cannot be denied that the perſons deſcribed in the fifth Propoſition of the Synod are ſuch, for *they profeſs their Aſſent to the Doctrine of Faith, and ſubjection to the Rules and Diſcipline of Chriſt; they give up themſelves to God, own the Covenant, do not deſtroy their Profeſſion by Errours, nor unholineſs of life; holding the Doctrine of Faith, and not being ſcandalous in life.* So that for ought that appears, that Aſſembly agreeth rather with the Synod, then with the Diſſenters.

2. In that our Brother maketh ſuch a diſtinction between *the third part of the Stars of* New-England *ſwept down*, and *A few Names in* New-England *that hold faſt the Name of God, and are ſtedfaſt in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel:* How well this Compariſon agreeth with the Rules of Charity, Humility and Modeſty, I ſhall leave to the judgement of others.

3. I muſt enquire into the Truth and Grounds of ſo deep a Charge, laid upon more then *the third part of the Stars*, the Lights ſet up in the Churches of *New-England*.

Is it the preſent Doctrine of this Synod, inlarging the Subject of Baptiſm beyond the Opinion of the Diſſenters, that is *their fall from Heaven?* And the more ſtrict Opinion of our Brethren, the Character of thoſe *few Names remaining that hold faſt the Faith and Order of the Goſpel?* as indeed it ſeemeth to be ſo. For, 1. This is the occaſion taken up to make this Compariſon. And 2. Thoſe other Imputations, of *Forſaking former Practices, Recanting of Elders, New Converſion of* New-England, in reference to this Doctrine, ſeem to intimate as much. 3. And that Expreſſion of *a few Names holding faſt the Faith and Order of the Goſpel*, doth plainly intimate, that not only *more then a third part of the Stars*, but alſo the generality of *New England* are greatly departed from *the Faith and Order of the Goſpel*, and that, at the preſent, in the judgement of this Author: which is ſo high a ſtrain, that I am loth to ſay what might be ſpoken of it.

Now if this be our *Fall from Heaven*, it is our comfort that we are not yet faln ſo farre as many bright Stars of the firſt Magnitude, that have ſhined gloriouſly in the Churches; ſuch as *Calvin*,

Cartwright, *Perkins*, *Ames*, and hundreds more, whose judgement is well known to be larger in this Point then the Synod doth hold forth. And we are faln no further then blessed *Cotton*, *Philips*, *Shepard*, *Rogers*, and others of the Bay Churches: Famous *Hooker* and *Stone* of *Connecticot*, *Prudden* of *New-Haven*, *Partridge* and *Newman* of *Plimouth*, with divers other Lights in *New-England*, of whom I am perswaded that they are gotten to Heaven in that Opinion, whereby we are supposed to be *swept down from Heaven*. But let this Brother beware, lest himself and his *few Names* be not judged by some to be *swept down from Heaven* also, who hold an Opinion, *That Infants of the Church are to be Baptized*, which is not so strict a Tenent as they would have.

4. But if this so great a Charge be laid upon *more then the third part of the Stars* upon any other ground, let it be considered whether the *Rules of Charity and Gospel-Order* would not require, that he should first have Convinced his Brethren of their *Fact*, (yea, indeed of their supposed Errour about *the Subject of Baptism*) before he should cast so great a Scandal upon them before the face of the world; even *an Heretick* may have *two Admonitions before rejection*. However, whether it be this or that ground, surely this course doth not a little darken that loud Profession of our Brother's *holding fast to the Order of the Gospel*.

It hath been our portion all along, to go *through evil Reports* from the mouthes of many discontented persons, and corrupt *Opinionists*, *Familists*, *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, and the like; but I little expected such things as these from so near a Friend and Brother. I will not deny or excuse the Declining of many Professors to corrupt Opinions, to the World, Loose Wayes, and the like: Neither will I justifie all things in all the Elders of *New-England*; failings may be found in Judgement and Practice, and perhaps some may be larger in their Judgement concerning *The Subject of Baptism*, then the Synod doth hold forth: But God forbid we should judge them to be *swept down from Heaven*, that differ from us in greater matters then these, or for such Blemishes as are incident to good men. But whether the generality of the Stars in *New-England* Churches be not yet in the right hand of Christ, shining in their Orbs with the light

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of Heavenly Doctrine, and Christian Converſation, I appeal to the Conſciences of all the ſober-minded People of God in the Country; yea, and alſo to the Conſcience of the Author of this Preface himſelf, who gives this Teſtimony of the Elders in the Synod, being more then half the Elders of all the Churches of *New-England*, pag. 5. *viz. That they were able, learned and godly*; and again, *Eminent in Learning and Piety*. However it be, it is a very *little thing to be judged of men*, whether approved or condemned.

Concerning that which is ſaid of Mr. *Parker* by name, for Publiſhing a Book in favour of Epiſcopacy; our Brother doth or might know, that the Book is diſtaſtful alſo to his Brethren, as well as to himſelf: yet the approved Learning and Piety of the perſon might have called for better language.

As for that Imputation, "*That the Common-Prayer-Book findeth* "*ſome Advocates in* New-England, *who can finde Stakes and Mate-* "*rials to edifie Gods People in a Congregational Church (as is ſaid.)* I wonder that a man of Piety and Gravity ſhould venture to publiſh ſuch things to the world upon (*As is ſaid*;) and to what end is it, except to caſt dirt upon his Brethren? Much more then is true, is ſaid of that and other things. The Lord help ſuch as profeſs ſuch *ſtedfaſtneſs in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel*, to walk up to the Rules of Goſpel-Order and Charity, more then this Brother hath done.

Thus much to the firſt Preface. Concerning the ſecond, *To the General Court*, I ſhall Animadvert onely upon two or three Paſſages of it. And

1. Whereas *pag.* 8. they tell the Honoured Court, "*That they* "*have yielded and voted with the reſt ſo farre, that rightly conſidered* "*and practiſed, it would ſilence all ſad Complaints againſt the many* "*great and prevailing corruptions of Youth amongſt us.*

Anſ. It is true, that one of the chief of our Diſſenting Brethren did propound, and earneſtly promote the third Propoſition; *viz. That the Infant-ſeed of the Church are Members of the ſame Church with their Parents, and when they are grown up, are perſonally under the Watch and Government of the Church:* and this rightly practiſed, would indeed tend much to the end aforeſaid; for ſo the Church, by

an Ordinance of Christ that hath his Promise annexed, should either bring such Youth to Repentance, or purge the Church of them. But it is as true, that this Treatise putteth such a sense and meaning upon that Proposition, as renders it useless and vain to the ends aforesaid. For, if they be not actual, personal nor *immediate Members*, whereby acts of Church-government should be put forth immediately upon their persons, but onely reach them at the second hand, *viz.* by their Parents, as was said by some in the Meeting-house, to which they referre, *pag.* 23. And if Excommunication, that healing Medicine of Christ *for the destruction of the flesh, and saving of the Soul*, may not touch them, as is in the same *Page* 23. Yea, if the Fœderal Holiness of their persons, and so their Covenant-interest, continue no longer then their minority, (wherein indeed they are scarce capable of any Church discipline) as is affirmed *Page* 37.) These things being so, let any man judge how it is possible for Church-government to reform such *great, many, and prevailing corruptions of Youth*.

2. *Page* 10. our Brethren say, "*It is apparent to all, what a* "*corrupt mass of Unbelievers shall by this change throng into the fel-* "*lowship of Gods People, and the children of strangers, uncircumcised* "*in heart, shall be brought into Gods Sanctuary to pollute it, contrary to* "Ezek 44.7,9.

Ans. 1. Whether these Parents in question be to be counted *Unbelievers*, or not, will appear after. But if the Charity of our Brethren will allow them no other term, I pray, Who let them *into the fellowship of Gods People?* Do not our Brethren with us affirm, That the Covenant of *Abraham* belongs unto them, and therefore they are to partake of Baptism the Seal of it? *And* (say they) *there is the whole Churches Communion in Baptism, as well as in the Lords Supper*, 1 Cor. 12.13. If then they would keep them out of *the fellowship of Gods People*, they must joyn with those that shut that door against all Infants by which they entred; for if they be *Unbelievers* that are so qualified as in Proposition the fifth, then surely they were so when they were Baptized. By this, with many other Passages, our Brethren may see whither their Principles do carry them. So that the difference between the Synod and our Brethren,

Brethren, is not about their *Admiſſion into the fellowſhip of Gods People*, but about *The Improvement of the Ordinances of Chriſt for their good, while they continue in that fellowſhip*; wherein the Synods Doctrine admits them not to acts of Communion with the reſt of Gods People, but as they are regularly fit; neither do the Synod continue them in that fellowſhip, any longer then they walk orderly, without deſerving the Cenſures of the Church. *Ezek.* 44. ſpeaks of *ſtrangers amongſt the children of Iſrael*, ſuch as *Tobiah*, *Neh* 13.4 &c. not of any Iſraelite, *ver.*9.

3. Our Brethren in their ſixth Conſideration, acknowledging "*The great Deliverances and Wonders that the Lord hath wrought in* "*former times for* New England; they adde, *But ſince the motion* "*of this Change, what the Lords dealing hath been and ſtill is, we* "*leave to the prudent to judge: We may glory in this New Light, but* "*we fear it will prove but glorying in our ſhame.*

Anſ. I had thought that Gods gracious anſwer to the Prayers of the Synod 1662. in ſending Rain ſo ſpeedily and ſweetly, might not onely have taken off that Imputation of the Drought unto the Synod, as if it was for their ſakes; but alſo it might have ſtayed our Brethren from ſuch Applications of the Providences of God to their own ends. I remember that when the *Popiſh Cantons* imputed the death of *Zuinglius* and *Oecolampadius* to the juſt Judgement of God upon them for cauſing their Troubles, the Hiſtorian hath this Obſervation upon it: *It is* (ſaith he) *a prone thought to attribute the diſpoſition of every Event to the Providence of God; but to determine to what ends thoſe Events are directed by his high Wiſdome, is not farre from Preſumption. Men are ſo ſtraightly and religiouſly wedded to their own Opinions, that they are perſwaded God loveth and favoureth them as much as themſelves.* Hiſt. of the Council of *Trent*, p. 60. But if we muſt needs take notice of the dealings of God with *New-England*, in reference to this caſe; Can any prudent man ſay, that the Deliverances of *New-England* are not as great and wonderful in theſe laſt years, and at this day, as in former years? And as for thoſe afflicting Providences that have lately befaln us, have we not had as heavy Strokes many wayes formerly? And have we not Sins enough that are evident, to humble us under the N.

Lords hand, as deſerving theſe and greater evils, but we muſt needs apply them as Judgements of God to this (falſly ſo called) Change, and brand the conſtant Doctrine of Gods eminent Meſſengers amongſt us, as a *New Light that will turn to our ſhame?* The Lord forgive theſe many harſh Cenſures of the Brethren.

Thus have I paſſed through this unpleaſing part of my Work: wherein, if by clearing the innocent, any thing doth reflect upon the Accuſers, I hope the equal-minded Reader will excuſe me; conſidering, that the Name of God is named upon the Elders and Churches of *New-England*, and would have ſuffered in them, ſhould not ſuch unjuſt Aſperſions be wiped off them by a juſt Apologie. Had our Brethren followed the Example of the Synod, with like Love, Tenderneſs and Moderation as is expreſſed towards them in their Preface, the world had not been ſo Scandalized, as I fear it is, by theſe Conteſts, and I had ſpared much of this labour. Oh! when ſhall we ſee Brethreu manage ſuch Diſputes with that Brotherly Love, Ingenuity, and Endeavours to finde out the Truth, as becometh the Cauſe of CHRIST, and without ſuch harſh Reflections upon mens perſons! The want of this *is a Lamentation, and ſhall be for a Lamentation.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Concerning our Brethrens Answer to the main Question.

CONcerning *The Order of this Treatise*, I need not trouble the Reader; nor concerning their two Propositions premised. Who doubteth that *Baptism is a Seal of the Gospel, and to be administred according to Gospel-Rules?* Or, *that the surest way to end Controversies, is to finde out how it was in the beginning?* Onely these Rules are too general, and have a like influence into all Controversies about Gospel-Ordinances.

I shall therefore endeavour to clear up from Scripture two or three Propositions, that have a more near and immediate respect to the Question now in debate. It is no question between us, *Whether adult persons to be joyned to the Church, and to be Baptized, should hold forth Faith and Repentance to the judgement of Charity, and that in some particular visible Church?* nor, *Whether the Infant-seed of such are to be Baptized?* But, the very Hinge whereupon our Debate turneth, lieth in these two things:

1. *Whether the Infant-seed of all Church-members ought to be Baptized?*
2. *What it is that Cuts off any from his Membership in the visible Church?*

Clear up these two from the Word of God; and the whole Controversie is issued. To this end I shall premise three things, which being proved by the Word of God, will make my way plain and easie through all these *Antisynodalia*.

That however the Membership of the seed of the Faithful be conveyed to them by their Parents instrumentally, yet it flows from, and is grounded upon Gods Institution, as the principal Efficient cause: *Propos.* 1.

cauſe thereof, who is pleaſed to extend the Grace of his Covenant not only to the Parents, but alſo to their ſeed. God enters into Covenant with them, *He is their God, They are his People.* This is evident *Gen.*17 7. *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between Me and Thee, and thy ſeed after thee, to be a God to thee, and to thy ſeed after thee:* At eight dayes old they were to be Circumciſed, as a Token of the Covenant between God and them, *ver.*11,12. *Deut.*29 11,12. *Their little ones ſtood before the Lord their God, to enter into Covenant with the Lord their God, to be eſtabliſhed a people to himſelf.* What can be ſpoken more plainly and fully to this purpoſe? *Acts* 2. 39. *The Promiſe is to your Children.* 1 Cor.7.14. *Your Children are holy.* And indeed, what can be ſuppoſed in the Parents Faith, Profeſſion, or Covenanting to bring in their ſeed, but it dependeth wholly upon Gods Free-grace, ordaining his Covenant ſo to be diſpenſed? And hence it followeth, That the Infant-ſeed are in their own perſons actually Members of the Church, being actually in this Covenant with God as *His People*, and he *Their God*, and having the Covenant in their fleſh, the Seal of it applied to their perſons. And hence they cannot be cut off from their intereſt in God, and his Covenant-Priviledges, but in ſuch a way as he hath ordained, which in Goſpel-times is by Church-cenſures. *Mat.*18. 1 *Cor.*5.

ropoſ. 2. There is a twofold Diſpenſation of the Covenant of God in his viſible Church: 1. Outward and viſible, by which the Lord beſtows upon his Church, and all the Members thereof, the outward Priviledges of the Covenant, his Ordinances, and Means of Grace, as they become capable thereof, and wherein he tenders unto them the Saving Benefits thereof, with many Means to bring up their hearts to the embracing thereof. This is evident, they have all the Name and Title of *Gods People, His Children, A Royal Prieſthood, Holy Nation, Saints,* &c. *Gen.*6. 2. *Exod.*19. 5,6. *Deut.* 32. 9. *Iſa.* 1. 1,2. *Pſal.* 50. 1,2. *Mat.*15.26. And the Ordinances and Means of Grace are theirs, *Rom.*3.1,2. & 9.4. So in the New-Teſtament, the whole Church of *Corinth* are called *Saints, and faithful in Chriſt.* The Seven Churches, *Rev.* 1. are called *Golden Candleſticks*, though there were corrupt Members in them. And the Miniſtry of the Word, and other Ordinances, belong to the viſible Church,

Church, *Epheſ.*4.11. 1 *Cor.*12.28. *Mat.*18. 1 *Cor.*5. Whence it is evident, That Officers are ſet in the Church *for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*, and for the healing and ſaving the Members of the viſible Church.

2. There is a more Inward, Spiritual, and Saving Diſpenſation of the Covenant to ſuch as truly Believe, and perform the Conditions of the Covenant, whoſe hearts God hath circumciſed according to the Promiſes of the Covenant, *Deut.*30.6. *Ezek.*36. From this different Diſpenſation it is, that the Lord, though he requires of all to *Fear the Lord their God*, to *Walk in his wayes*, to *Love him with all their hearts*, &c. *Deut.*10.12,13. and *keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love God, and walk with God in faith and obedience*; but reproveth the wicked *for taking his Covenant into their mouthes*, Pſal.50. rejects their Sacrifices, *Iſa.*1. & 58. calleth them *Uncircumciſed*, *Ethiopians*, &c. in reſpect of any inward and ſaving Benefits of the Covenant: yet ſtill he owneth them as *His People*, *Saints in Covenant with him*, Pſal 50.1. and followeth them with the Means of Grace till there be no remedy, 2 *Chron.* 36. This is evident in all the ſtory of the Church in the Old and New-Teſtament, as will appear more afterward.

There is a different Rule and Reaſon of admitting Members into the viſible Church, and the continuation of them in it, being regularly admitted. In *Admitting Members into the Church*, we juſtly look for ſuch poſitive Qualifications as the Word of God requireth, viz. *A viſible Profeſſion of Faith and Repentance in adult perſons, and Fœderal Holineſs in Infants*. We well approve that Saying of *Chamier*, quoted by our Brethren, "*No man can diſallow ſuch diligence, "to prevent the profaning of holy things, and leſt ſuch as* Simon Magus *ſhould lie hid.* But to caſt out ſuch as are *Regularly admitted*, we muſt have poſitive Impenitency in ſin, as a ground to *count them as Heathens and Publicans*, *Mat.*18. and that after due patience towards them; for, even *an Heretick may have two Admonitions before rejection*, Tit. 3. 10. or at leaſt ſome notorious ſcandalous ſin, as ſome conceive from 1 *Cor.*5. *Propoſ.* 3

Theſe things premiſed, I ſhall proceed to conſider the next

thing in order, which is our Brethrens *Answer to the main Question*, viz. *Who are the Subjects of Baptism?* To which their Answer is this:

"*That visible Believers and Converts in full Communion with an in-*
"*stituted Church, (being unbaptized) together with their next seed in*
"*minority, are the proper and immediate Subjects of Baptism, as to the*
"*receiving of it.* For the proof of this, they referre to the places before alledged, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. *Mark* 16. 16. *Acts* 2. 38, 39. Their large Discourse I pass by, though some things might be matter of Dispute: but I would decline all impertinencies, and come to their Reason gathered out of those Scriptures; which is this:

"*Those are proper and immediate Subjects of Baptism, to whom*
"*Christ, in the Gospel-institution, hath appointed it. But visible Be-*
"*lievers and Converts in full Communion with an instituted Church, are*
"*the persons (being unbaptized) to whom Christ, in the Gospel-institution*
"*of Baptism, hath appointed it. Therefore visible Believers,* &c.

The greatest weight or stress of this Argument, lieth upon that place *Acts* 2. 38, 39. and I see our Brethren put much confidence in it, affirming, "*That the* minor *is expres Scripture, and therefore*
"*though many are unwilling it should be true, and will cavill against it,*
"*it will be found true at the Day of Judgement,* &c.

Ans. God forbid, that in searching after the Truth we should *Cavill* at the Word of God; but let us take heed of *Adding to it*, or *Taking from it*: But whether the *Minor* will prove true, or not, we need not stay till the *Day of Judgement*; for, the holy Scriptures, the Judge of all Controversies, will easily decide it; and I will directly deny the *Minor*: for none of those Scriptures, or any other that I know of, will prove, *That full communion with an instituted Church is requisite to the Subject of Baptism*, much less *that such are the proper Subjects thereof*; as if such, and onely such, were to be Baptized. This of *Full Communion* our Brethren thought would advantage their Cause, and so have put it in: but it is a meer Addition to the Word of God, which wholly fails them of any proof, yea makes evidently against them. In that principal place, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. it is evident, that they were Baptized before their *Full Communion*: For, 1. *Peter* called them to be Baptized upon the

ground

ground of the Promiſe, *ver.* 38. 2. They were *Baptized, and added to the Church*, before full Communion, *ver.* 41,42. 3. It had been very prepoſterous to put them into full Communion, before *Union with the Church ſealed by Baptiſm*; for *Baptiſm is a Seal of Union with the Church*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. which muſt go before Communion. But they ſeem to ſuppoſe, at leaſt, that ſome in full Communion may be unbaptized, by that word *(being unbaptized:)* but the truth is, that our Brethrens confidence in this Argument will be found ſo greatly to fail them, that whil'ſt by it they ſeek to ſtraiten *The Subject of Baptiſm*, beyond the Doctrine of the Synod, they deſtroy and take away the *whole Subject it ſelf of Baptiſm*, becauſe there will never be found any ſuch perſons, according to *Goſpel-Rule*, (which they call ſo much for, and appeal unto) that are in *full Communion with an inſtituted Church, being unbaptized.* I will be a little bold with our Brethren in this caſe, to challenge them to produce any Rule or Example in the Goſpel, of any perſon that either was, or by Rule might be in *full Communion with an inſtituted Church, being unbaptized.* I hope this Anſwer is plain, and no *Cavill.*

Yet for the further clearing up of this Anſwer, I ſhall remove what may be further ſaid by our Brethren.

Object. *Though thoſe in* Acts 2. *were not in full Communion actually before Baptiſm, yet they were admitted to a ſtate and right to full Communion by their Baptiſm, which theſe Children in queſtion are not.*

Anſ. 1. The Queſtion is not, *What ſtate or right the Baptized are partakers of, as a conſequent fruit of Baptiſm received?* but, *What it is that conſtitutes a perſon to be a fit Subject to be Baptized?* To deſcribe the proper *Subject of Baptiſm*, by the conſequent fruits of it, and not by the precedent cauſes that gives right to Baptiſm, is very improper and prepoſterous. If the Queſtion were, *Who are the proper Subjects of Church-memberſhip?* we ſay, *Confederating viſible Believers, and their ſeed*; for this makes them fit for, and brings them into ſuch a relation. But ſhould any anſwer, *That the proper Subject of Church-memberſhip, is a perſon in full communion with an inſtituted Church*; or, *One that is under the Teaching and Rule of Church-Officers, which are the fruits of Church-memberſhip received:* Who

does not ſee the weakneſs of ſuch an Anſwer? and the like is this caſe, Baptiſm being the Seal of Gods Covenant with his Church, whereby *we are Baptized into one Body.* 2. Although the Infant-ſeed of the Church cannot actually enjoy full Communion in all Ordinances, as their Parents do; yet the Covenant of God ſealed to them in Baptiſm, ſets them in *a ſtate and right* to all the Benefits of the Covenant, to be enjoyed by them as they become fit for them, as well as their Parents: for, the Covenant of God with Parents and ſeed, is one and the ſame. All that are in the ſame Covenant, are bound to the ſame Duties of the Covenant, and have the ſame right to all the Benefits of the Covenant, as they come up to perform the Conditions, and are fit for the enjoyment of the Bleſſings. In adult Members it is ſo, who being under Admonition for Scandal, or in a Frenzy, or the like caſe, though they partake not of all the good of the Covenant, yet their right remains: So here, when the ſeed grow up to perform the Duties of the Covenant, they alſo partake of the Benefits, not by any new Covenant, or Memberſhip, but by the right of that Covenant God made with them, and ſealed to them in Baptiſm, as will appear more fully afterward.

2. I ſhall adde further, It is true, that to admit adult perſons into the Church, and to Baptiſm, viſible Faith is required; and ſo much the Texts alledged prove: but this is not the caſe in Diſpute between us, but *About perſons already in the Church, and Baptized, whether in ſuch, the ground of Baptizing their ſeed, be Faith and Grace made viſible in the ſame manner*, or *their Intereſt in the Covenant?* and therefore the Argument doth not conclude the Queſtion. Put caſe any of thoſe *viſible Believers and converts*, Acts 2. ſhould afterward diſcover by their Worldlineſs, Looſeneſs, or other wayes, that there is in them no ſap or ſavour of Faith and Grace, even to the charitable judgement of moſt in the Church; my Queſtion is, *Whether yet (ſo long as they continue in the Church) their Infant-ſeed ſhall not be Baptized?* If it be granted, then it is not ſuch viſible Faith and Grace, but the Intereſt in the Church and Covenant that gives *Right to Baptiſm*, and ſo to theſe Church-members in queſtion. If this be denied, let there be one Tittle of Scripture-Rule or Example

ample produced to the contrary. Having anſwered their Reaſon, I ſhall preſent an Argument from the ſame Text, to confirm the Doctrine of the Synod. It is to be noted, That the Promiſe, *Acts* 2. 39. is *That Covenant-Promiſe which God made with* Abraham, as appeareth by that parallel place, *Acts* 3. where *ver.* 19. *Peter* exhorts to Repentance, as in *chap.* 2. 38. and *chap.* 3. 25. he uſeth the ſame Reaſon in other words, *You are the children of the Covenant which God made with our fathers*; the ſubſtance whereof all grant to be this, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy ſeed in their generations* (although the Apoſtle there makes uſe of another branch of the Covenant concerning Chriſt, that ſeed in whom *God is the God of his People.*) Now the Reaſon ſtands thus:

If the Covenant-promiſe to Abraham *and his ſeed, be a ground to Repent and be Baptized in the Goſpel-diſpenſation, then it is the Covenant of God with his viſible Church that gives right to Baptiſm. But the Covenant-promiſe was a ground to Repent and be Baptized, in Goſpel-diſpenſation,* Acts 2. 38, 39. with *chap.* 3. 19, 25. *Therefore it is the Covenant of God with his viſible Church, that gives right to Baptiſm:* which is the Doctrine of the Synod.

Thus much to their Scripture-Argument. To which our Brethren adde the Teſtimony of Mr. *Richard Mather*: "*Well agree-*
"*ing with this* (ſay they) *is the Anſwer of Reverend Mr.* Mather *in*
"*his Catechiſm.*

Anſ. But, by their leave, it differeth from their Anſwer in the main thing that toucheth the cauſe in hand; for, there is nothing of *full communion* in his, which they put into theirs.

2. That Reverend and Learned Author ſpeaketh onely what adult perſons ſhould be, in joyning to the Church, and the ſeed of ſuch ſo converted and joyned, which hath reference to their firſt joyning to the Church; not denying, that being once regularly joyned, they may after have their ſeed Baptized, though they ſhould not approve themſelves to be true Converts.

As for the *Objections* and *Anſwers* here brought in, they are not the Objections of the Synod: And what is any way pertinent to our Diſpute, may ſufficiently be taken off by what is ſaid, and therefore I ſhall paſs them by. And I may the rather ſo do, ſeeing

our Brethren in their third Anſwer have yielded the Cauſe. For, if the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and the Circumciſion of his ſeed, was appointed upon the ſame terms that Baptiſm was; Why ſhould not Baptiſm be continued ſucceſſively to the ſeed remaining in the Covenant, as well as Circumciſion?

CHAP. III.

Concerning our Brethrens Notes upon the firſt and ſecond Propoſition.

IN the firſt Propoſition our Brethren onely give an Explication of the word *Viſible Church*, taking the word *Church* as a *Genus* of all particular Churches; from which we Diſſent not.

In the ſecond Propoſition, *viz.* *That the Members of the viſible Church according to Scripture, are confederate viſible Believers, and their Infant-ſeed:* They have made divers Notes upon it.

1. "*That by viſible Believers, they intend true Believers to the judge-*
"*ment of charity.* And herein we agree.

Second Note, "*That viſible Believers, and their Infant-ſeed, are*
"*rightly diſtinguiſhed.* And ſo farre we agree alſo, That they are perſons diſtinctly and ſeverally covenanted with by the Lord, not *wrapped up in their Parents* (as they ſpeak.)

But whereas they diſtinguiſh them from their Parents, "*as not*
"*being Believers, never ſa called in Scripture. How can they believe*
"*that know not the right hand from the left? They have no Faith actual*
"*or habitual, nor can have, without a Miracle, and we hold Miracles*
"*are ceaſed.*

Anſ. This is the great Objection of the Anabaptiſts againſt the Baptizing of Infants; and what the ſcope of this Note is here, I know not, except it be to deny them any actual and perſonal Membership in the Church, as in their next Note: I ſhall therefore ſpeak

the

the more fully to it. And first it appeareth, the Scripture numbers them amongst Believers, if it doth not also expresly call them so. *Mat.* 18.6. *One of these little ones that believe in me*; which some interpret of *Infants*. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. where all in the Church are called *Believers*, in opposition to *Infidels*: And no doubt *Paul* would not allow any of these to marry with Infidels when grown up, by that Rule of his, and therefore he reckons them as Believers.

2. To make a person a Member of the visible Church, the matter is not whether he hath Faith and Grace really, or not; if he hath such qualifications as the Rule of the Word accepteth for Faith in the visible Church, we can go no further. This is clear, and will be easily granted in respect of adult persons. If a man profess he *doth believe with all his heart*, as the Eunuch, *Acts* 8. and nothing appears to the contrary: If a man appear *Pricked at the heart*, *Gladly receive the Word*, &c. as those *Acts* 2. Gods Rule accepts of such as Believers, and so must the Church, though the Lord seeth that some, it may be many such, have no Faith in truth; for, *Many are called, but few chosen.* And however they may afterward discover themselves, as *Ananias*, *Simon Magus*, &c. yet all will grant these were rightly received as visible Believers. In like manner is the case of Infants: The matter is not, whether they have true Faith, or not, in the act or habit, so they have such qualifications as God accepts of, to receive their persons into his Covenant, and to be Members of the Body of Christ: This sufficeth, though they have no Faith or Grace really. Now that the Lord doth so accept of them into the number of the Faithful, and as Believers, appeareth, 1. Because he doth account them Holy, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. be it Fœderal or Covenant-Holiness, this implies that *God is their God*; and if God gives himself unto them, surely he accepted them as Believers: He is not the God of Infidels, who are *without God*, Ephes. 2. 12. The Covenant of God is the same with Parents, and their seed, and therefore God accepteth them as such as are answerable to the Terms and Conditions of that Covenant. 2. This appeareth from the Nature of the Seal of the Covenant: Circumcision was *a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, Rom. 4. When God appointed this Seal to be set upon Infants, surely God numbred them,

them with Believers. So when we are ſaid to be *Baptized into Chriſt*, can there be any Union with Chriſt without Faith? As no real Union without true Faith, ſo no viſible Union without that which is accepted as Faith: And when the Lord Jeſus ſaith, *Of ſuch is the Kingdome of God*; doth the Kingdome of God belong to Unbelievers? If it be ſaid, *It is their Parents Faith that is accepted for them, not any thing in their own perſons*: I anſwer, If ſo, that God will accept the Parents Faith and Profeſſion in their name and ſtead, as a Publick Perſon covenanting for them; yet this is Gods free and preventing Grace towards the ſeed, and doth engage their perſons to the Duties of the Covenant, to avouch *God for their God*, &c. and therefore they are actually and perſonally in Covenant with God, as well as their Parents.

3. I adde further, That as we muſt reſt in ſuch Signs of Faith as the Rule requireth, though it ſhould not be there; ſo alſo we muſt in charity judge the beſt, and walk towards ſuch as viſible Believers, till by impenitency in ſin the Church have juſt cauſe to count them as *Heathens and Publicans*. So *Phil.* 1. 7. *It is meet I ſhould think thus of you all, becauſe you are in my heart.* Love and Church-charity ſhould reach farre, eſpecially to Members of a Church regularly received, becauſe the Lord doth give Faith to ſome; and who have Faith in truth, who not, is hard for us to judge. And ſo it is in ſuch Members as came in in their Infancy: We know the Lord gives Faith and Grace to ſome betimes, as to *Samuel*, *Timothy*, and others; yea, in all Elect Infants that die in minority, no doubt God gives them the Spirit of Faith, and that which is proportionable to the act of Faith; and therefore in charity we are to look at them as Believers, till for impenitency in ſin, the Church ſhall *count them as Heathens and Publicans.*

Their third Note is, "*That though they be Members in general, yet* "*Infants ſeed are only fœderally holy; others that have taken hold of* "*the Covenant, are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Cor. 6. 11. *Theſe have* "*a Parental and partial Right, not compleat and perfect. Thus the* "*Lord ſpeaks* Deut. 4 37. & 10. 15. Acts 2. 38 39. *So Dr.* Ames "*diſtinction into Perfect and Imperfect*, Medul. Lib. 1. Cap. 32. "Sect. 13.

Anſ.

Anſ. 1. Let it here be applied what was ſaid of their Faith in Gods acceptance, and the reality of it in ſome of them, as well as in ſome admitted by Profeſſion of Faith.

2. Concerning this diſtinction of *Fœderal Holineſs* and *Sanctified in Chriſt Jeſus*: It is not ſufficiently conſidered what is contained in *Fœderal Holineſs*; Doth it not include, that *They are in Covenant with God*, that *God is their God*, that *They are his People*, *An holy People to himſelf*, *A Royal Prieſthood*, *A Choſen Generation*, &c? which the Apoſtle applieth to *Believers*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. And what difference is there between *Sanctified in Chriſt Jeſus*, and *Saints, and Faithful in Chriſt Jeſus?* which the Apoſtle attributeth to the whole Church, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. whereof the *holy ſeed* was a part, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14.

3. To ſay, *Theſe have Parental and partial Right*, Deut. 4. 37. & 10. 15. Acts 2. 38. doth any of theſe Texts prove, that *Parental Right* (as they call it) or the Right by the Covenant of God with their Fathers, is *a partial Right?* If *God loved their fathers, and therefore choſe their ſeed after them*; was not the *ſeed* the object of Gods choyce? and as *perfect Members* of the Church in all ages, as their Fathers were? It ſeems the Lord did as great things for them, as for their Fathers, out of his love to them, bringing *them out of Egypt with great power*, Deut. 4. 37, 38. And were not *their little ones eſtabliſhed to be a People to God*, as well as their Fathers? *Deut.* 29. 11, 13.

4. Doctor *Ames* makes nothing for their Tenent, but agreeth with the Synod. His ſaying (take it intire) is this: *Children of the faithful are to be numbred amongſt the faithful, as Members of the Church*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. *for they are partakers of the ſame Covenant, and alſo of the ſame Profeſſion with their Parents: yet Infants are not ſo perfect Members of the Church, that they can exerciſe acts of Communion, or be admitted to partake of all Priviledges, untill the increaſe of Faith appeareth; but from thoſe things that pertain to the beginning of Faith, and entrance into the Church, they are not to be excluded.* Medul. Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Sect. 12 13. By this it is evident, that he doth not make them *Imperfect Members*, in reſpect of the relation of Membership, but in reſpect of *acts of Communion*: Even as a childe of

the family is not ſo perfect to do the work, & enjoy all the Priviledges of the Family, as a grown perſon is; but yet he is as perfectly a Member of the Family, as a grown man. Beſides, that eminent Doctor looked at *Infants of the faithful* as capable of ſuch things as belong to *the beginning of Faith*, and to *be admitted to acts of Communion, as the increaſe of their Faith appeareth*: He thought of no other and new Membership to intitle them to all Ordinances, but that, *to come to them by their Covenant in Infancy*. What can be more full, to ſhew his concurrence with the Synod?

Object. "*But Membership is a word of Relation, and therefore* "*cannot admit of degrees of more or leſs.*

To this our Brethren Anſwer, "*That it is a clear exception from* "*the general Rule, That ſuch Relations, the foundation whereof is Qua-*"*lity or Action, do admit of diverſity of degrees; as Similitude is a* "*Relation grounded on ſome Quality; one thing may be more or leſs* "*like another: ſo Calefaction,* &c.

Reply. The Authors of this Diſtinction are not ſo authentick, but that it may be examined by the Rules of right Reaſon. And firſt it confoundeth all Logical Arguments, making *Cauſe* and *Effect*, yea *comparata*, to be *Relates*, which is againſt Reaſon.

2. This Diſtinction will not hold: For, what *Relates* are there, whoſe foundation is not in Action or Quality? Why is this man a Father, but becauſe he begat a Son? The Relation of Maſter and Servant, Husband and Wife, and the like, is it not by Covenant, which is an *Action?* So that by this Rule, all *Relates* ſhould admit *Degrees of more or leſs*; which is againſt that received Rule of Logicians.

But how is this Exception applied to this caſe?

"*In both which reſpects* (ſay our Brethren) *the Membership of the* "*Infants Faith, and act of Confederation being grounded on the Parents* "*Faith, is rightly diſtinguiſhed from the Membership of ſuch as are* "*adult, which is grounded on their own Faith and Confederation.*

Reply. What dependance hath this upon the former Diſtinction? where this Relation is ſaid to be founded upon ſuch diverſity of Action, as makes two ſorts of diſtinct Members, as is pretended, and not onely two degrees of Membership?

2. There

2. There is no ſuch diverſity of the Foundation of Member-ſhip, as ſhould thus diſtinguiſh theſe Members; the Foundation is one and the ſame, *viz.* The Free-grace of God in his Covenant, extended both to Parent and Childe, *Gen.* 17.7,9. *I will be thy God, and the God of thy ſeed:* The way of entring into this Covenant on man's part, is onely a differing *modus* or manner of Covenanting with God. As a Sciens put into the Stock by hand, and the Branches that grow out of it, are all equally parts of the Tree, though the Branches were not ſo put in by hand as the Sciens was. A Father that purchaſeth Lands to himſelf and his Childe, the Childe hath as perfect and good a Right as the Father hath, though he did not make the Bargain and Covenant, as his Father did.

The fourth Note of our Brethren is upon thoſe words, "*Whoſe* "*next Parents are in Covenant:* which they ſay is *ambiguous*; and therefore they diſtinguiſh between "*Parental Covenant*, (as they call "it) *and Perſonal with preſuppoſed Faith and Repentance: the former* "*they count inſufficient to capacitate the next ſeed to Baptiſm.*

Before I come to Anſwer their Reaſons interwoven in this Diſcourſe: Seeing our Brethren have ſo oft recourſe to their Diſtinctions of Members into *actual, not actual*; *perſonal, not perſonal*; by *Parental Covenant, and perſonal*; *immediate, and mediate*; *perfect, and imperfect*: and lay ſo much weight upon them; as, *That the Parental Covenant cannot capacitate their ſeed to Baptiſm*; *That their Memberſhip by Parental Covenant laſts no longer then minority*, pag. 37. and, *The perſonal Covenant of ſuch, makes them Members*; *is the Form of their Memberſhip*, and the like: I ſhall therefore here, once for all, recall theſe things to *the Law and Teſtimony*, and try what Light is in them.

And firſt, in my beſt Obſervation, I can finde no ſuch diſtinction of *Parental and Perſonal Covenant*, that ſhould make two ſorts or kindes of Members, neither in the Name or Thing: but all along in the Scripture, the Covenant is one and the ſame that God makes with his People, and is called by the name of *Gods Covenant*, Gen. 17. where this Covenant was moſt ſolemnly made, and to which the oft-renewed Covenants in the Old Teſtament, and the Covenant or Promiſe in the New Teſtament, hath reference, as *Rom.* 9.

Acts 2. 38,39. with *Chap.* 3.25. *Gal.* 3. In that place, I ſay, the Lord calleth it *My Covenant*, ſeven times, and that in reſpect of *Abrahams* ſeed, as well as of himſelf, *ver.* 7,9,10. *Deut.* 29. 10,11, 12. *The little ones ſtood to enter into Covenant with the Lord their God.* Ezek. 16 8. *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* This is the common language of the Scripture. In the New Teſtament, beſides other places, note that 1 *Cor.* 12. 12,13. where the Apoſtle proves that the Church is *one Body*, conſiſting of *many Members* (ſome weak, and of leſs honour, *&c.*) By Baptiſm, *the Seal of the covenant*, we are *all Baptized into one Body*; and ſo as that there might be *no Schiſm in the Body*: But how ſhall the *Body be one*, if ſome be Baptized into this Body *as actual and perſonal Members*, ſome *not actual nor perſonal*; ſome into *a parental covenant*, ſome *perſonal?* What a Schiſm might this make? ſome ſaying, *I am not actually of the Body*, though Baptized with the ſame Baptiſm, (and *there is but one Baptiſm*;) others may ſay, *I am of the Body perſonally, You are no actual Members of it?* It ſeemeth the Apoſtle knew not theſe Diſtinctions: So *Gal.* 3. 27, 28. *All are Baptized into Chriſt, and are all one in Chriſt.*

2. I finde, that the Scripture doth clearly own the Church-ſeed grown up to adult age, to be in Covenant with God, and ſo Members of the Church by virtue of Gods Covenant made with them in their Infancy, and that before any *perſonal Covenant*, as they call it. See *Deut.* 5.2,3. *The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us; even us, who are all of us here alive this day.* Now who were theſe, but that generation numbred by *Moſes* and *Eleazar*, when all that were numbred at the firſt, of twenty years old and upward, were dead? See *Numb.* 26.63,64. with *Deut.* 1.3. So that multitudes of theſe now alive, were in their infancy and minority when God made that Covenant with them in *Horeb*; and yet it is expreſly ſaid, *God made that Covenant with them, even with their own perſons*: that was a *Perſonal*, not a *Parental Covenant*, as our Brethren phraſe it. And this is ſet out with a double Emphaſis: 1. Negatively, *Not with our fathers*; Why ſo, was it not made with their fathers now dead? Yes ſurely, but not *only with them*; or, *not with us as wrapped up with*,

or

or in our fathers. 2. *With us*, Affirmatively; and again, *Even with us*; and a third time, *With us that are now alive*, in distinction from *their fathers that were dead:* and all this before that second Covenant, *Deut.*29. for this is said of them before the Repetition of that Covenant at *Horeb*, to provoke them to the obedience thereof. Where then is this *Parental Covenant* distinguished from *Personal*, so as to make two sorts or degrees of Members?

3. I observe, That when the Scripture calleth this Covenant; *The Covenant of their fathers*, or *of the Lord God of their fathers*, it is never so styled, to the diminution or abatement of any Blessing, Priviledge, or Favour that might come to their seed by it, but rather for the advantage, and greater good of the Children: See *Exod.*3.15,16. *&* 6.3,4,5. *Lev.*26.44.45. *I will not abhor them*, &c. *But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their Ancestors, whom I brought out of Egypt*: So *Deut.*4.31. So that in these, and divers other Scriptures, we see no such disadvantage to the seed, by being under *Parental Covenant*, as our Brethren call it; who first bring down Gods Covenant to a *Parental Covenant*, and then make a very slight matter of that also; that *it cannot capacitate their seed to Baptism; Is not sufficient to establish their seed to be a people to God; Will not reach beyond the minority of their seed*, and the like.

Object. But it will be Objected, *That although these Distinctions be not so expresly found in Scripture-phrase, yet the nature of the subject doth admit such Distinctions.*

Ans. 1. Some of them cannot consist with the nature of the subject; as for a person to be a Member, but not *actually*; a person in Covenant baptized into the Body of Christ, and yet not *personally*: these are plain Contradictions *in adjecto*, as we say, To be *A Member*, and yet *No Member*. As for this of *Parental* and *Personal Covenant*, so much used, it maketh not two Covenants, the Covenant is but one, and that *Gods Covenant*, as is said: there is but a differing *modus*, or manner of entring into it.

2. As for the rest, of *Mediate* and *Immediate Members*, *Perfect* and *Imperfect*, and the rest: Suppose that in some sense the subject do admit them, yet they can never bear up such Consequences as are built upon them: for, they are but distributions *ex adjunctis*, and

thoſe common Adjuncts to many other Subjects, which cannot make any eſſential difference: As when we diſtinguiſh the Church into *Viſible* and *Inviſible*, it is ſtill but one and the ſame Church: So Church-Covenant into *Explicite* and *Implicite*, there is ſtill but one ſort of Churches or Covenants: So the Church is either *Incompleat*, without Officers, or *Compleat*, with her Officers; yet ſtill a true Church, and not two ſorts of Churches. Such is this caſe, if we put twenty ſuch Diſtinctions upon Members from common Adjuncts, they make no eſſential difference. Theſe things, beſides much more that might be ſaid, to me afford this Concluſion, That in theſe Diſtinctions, and the Conſequences thereof, there is no Scripture-Light, but a Miſt to darken the Free and Rich Grace of God, ſhining out in his Covenant to the Faithful and their ſeed.

I return now to conſider the Reaſons of our Brethren, to prove, that *Parental Covenant cannot capacitate their ſeed for Baptiſm.*

Their firſt Reaſon is, "*For ſo the Covenant ſhould be intailed to a* "*thouſand generations.*

Anſ. What our Brethrens *Parental Covenant* can do, I know not, but ſurely Gods Covenant is *An everlaſting Covenant*, Gen. 17.7. *to be a God to their ſeed*, viz. They keeping within the Covenant, *from generation to generation*: And if the Lord will intail his Covenant, and the Means of Grace thereby, *to ſuch as keep his Covenant, to a thouſand generations*, what hurt is in that? Bleſſed be his Name for it.

Reaſ. 2. "Iſhmael *and* Eſau *had the Parental Covenant, but were* "*not Eſtabliſhed thereby.*

Anſ. This was not from any inſufficiency in Gods Covenant (for ſo I muſt call it) but from their ſin that continued not in it. By this Reaſon, *Perſonal Covenant by Profeſſion of Faith and Repentance*, is as inſufficient; for ſuch, by their ſin, may not be eſtabliſhed.

Reaſ. 3. "*The immediate Parents Unbelief breaks off the Covenant* "*from their ſeed*, Rom. 11.20,21,22.

Anſ. True; ſuch Unbelief whereby they obſtinately rejected Chriſt, *Acts* 13.45,46. *Mat.* 21.42,43. but this was not from any inſufficiency in Gods Covenant to *capacitate their ſeed to Baptiſm*, or *Eſtabliſh a People*, but from their rejecting of the Covenant,

in

in *rejecting Christ, that Seed in whom all were to be blessed.*

Reas. 4. "*Baptism is, as Circumcision was, A Seal of the Righte-*
"*ousness of Faith,* Rom. 4. 11. *which is invisible in those children that*
"*should transmit Baptism.*

Ans. This is true, that as Circumcision, so Baptism is *a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*: And thence I infer, that when God by his Institution appointed that Seal to be transmitted to the seed of *Abraham*, so long as they continued in the visible Covenant, they were accepted of God as Believers in Ecclesiastical account: and so it is in respect of transmitting Baptism; so long as the seed of the Faithful continue in the visible Church, they are visible Believers in Ecclesiastical account, and may so transmit Baptism to their seed.

Reas. 5. They alledge "*Acts* 2. 38, 39. *which*, they say, *restrains*
"*Baptism to the next seed of such Parents as manifest Repentance and*
"*Effectual calling, and is of more weight then any Argument from far-*
"*fetched and uncertain consequences out of the Old Testament.*

Ans. To this Text is fully answered before; and, as was said, it favours the Doctrine of the Synod, *That the Promise or Covenant is the ground of Baptism.* And that this Text hath no such *Restraint*, it may appear thus: Let all be granted that is here said, yet suppose such visible Converts discover afterward no sap or savour of Grace, to the fairest Charity, but continue still in the Church, shall not their seed be Baptized? or must every Church-member hold forth a Profession of Repentance at the Baptism of every childe? I suppose our Brethren will not so affirm; and if so, then a Church-member, though not apparently a true Penitent, may have his seed Baptized. As for *far-fetched Consequences from the Old Testament*, the following Discourse will shew, that none use them so much as our Brethren do.

Concerning the Answers here given to an Objection from *Exod.* 20. The Synod doth not make that Objection, but agreeth with this Interpretation given in the third and fourth Answer; *viz. So that the Priviledges are onely continued to the seed of the next Parents, that continue in the Covenant, and are not broken off.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the third Propoſition.

Propoſ 3. *THat the Infant-ſeed of Confederate viſible Believers, are Members of the ſame Church with their Parents, and when grown up, are perſonally under the Watch and Government of that Church.*

Our Diſſenting Brethren, by their dilute interpretations of this Propoſition, ſeem to recede from their own Conceſſions: For this Propoſition was propounded, and earneſtly promoted by one of the chief of them, as tending to iſſue other Difficulties amongſt us, and to *Reform the corruptions of Youth*: and there were not above three noted that diſſented from it. But when it was obſerved (as is here ſaid) that the other Propoſitions would be inferred from it, and ſo ſtrongly, that ſome ſaid, *The whole Cauſe was given up in that Propoſition*; Our Brethren therefore now think to eaſe the matter by their interpretations: but ſuch they are, as cannot conſiſt with the terms of the Propoſition, as will appear.

"*Firſt*, (ſay they) *when it is ſaid, They are perſonally under the* "*Watch of the Church; the meaning is not, that they have an actual,* "*perſonal, and immediate Membership, which is proper to thoſe in* "*full communion, but onely that the Church-watch, in the diſpenſation of* "*it, ſhould reach unto their perſons: which was publickly expreſſed in* "*the Meeting-houſe by us.*

Anſ. How inconſiſtent are theſe things? 1. Theſe perſons are *Members of the Church*, but not *actually*: How then are they Members? *potentially*? ſo are many that are fit matter for a Church, that yet are no Members: or are they ſo *habitually*? ſurely they are actually *Baptized into the Body of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. And ſhall

we

we Baptize actually, ſuch as are not actually in the Covenant? 2. *They are perſonally under the Watch and Government of the Church*, yet the Church muſt not deal with their perſons, but reach their perſons at the ſecond hand, *viz.* by their Parents: (So indeed ſome expreſſed themſelves, but I thought it would not have been owned by the reſt) But *thus to reach their perſons*, is not to touch them with any act of Church-government, but of Family-government onely. Yea, thus to *reach their perſons*, is no more then the Church may reach an Heathen ſervant: for the Church may Cenſure the Maſter, if he reſtrain not the evils of his Servant, as well as a Father for the evils of his Childe.

"*Secondly*, (ſay they) *By Diſcipline, we do not intend Excommuni-*
"*cation, which is proper to Offenders in full communion; for how can*
"*they be caſt out of full communion that were never in it?*

Anſ. Then they muſt ſuppoſe that Excommunication is no part of Diſcipline, or intend a Diſcipline ineffectual to Chriſts ends: for what are Admonitions unregarded, without that Cenſure to ſet them home? *Mat.*18. Excommunication is not to caſt out of full communion onely, but out of all communion: *Let him be as an Heathen and Publican.* It is a giving up *to Satan, for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the Spirit may be ſaved,* 1 Cor.5.5. and this ſoveraign Medicine all that are within are capable of, and may ſtand in need of it.

"*Nevertheleſs*, ſay they, *the Church may diſown them, and declare*
"*them to be no Members, upon their deſerting of the Church, and the Co-*
"*venant of their fathers, by ſuch a Sentence as* Peter *pronounced to*
"Simon Magus, *Acts* 8.21.

Anſ. 1. This diſowning ſuch as no Members, is a meer invention of man, never ordained of Chriſt, nor tending to reach the ends of his Diſcipline: for, though it ſeems to agree with Excommunication, in not owning them as Members; yet it wanteth that awfull dread of Excommunication, to humble the ſinner, and bring him in. Yea, thus to diſown them as no Members, is to rid the Church of any further care of them, as thoſe *without*. But all acts of Chriſts Diſcipline, are acts of the love and compaſſion of Chriſt and his Church to the Souls of offenders, to ſeek their Repentance and

Salvation, 1 *Cor.* 5. 2. 2 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7, *&c.*

2. *Acts* 8. 21. giveth no ground of this Practice: For, 1. *Peter* did not presently disown him as no Member (neither indeed doth the place referre to Membership, but to *the power of giving the Holy Ghost*) but declaring his sin and danger, he exhorteth him to *Repentance*, and to *pray to God for pardon*, ver. 22. which implies, that upon his Repentance he was ready to promise pardon, according to the end of Christs Discipline: but persisting impenitently in his sin, he might then be *cast out*. Besides, 2. This Sentence was upon one that came in by *Profession of Faith*; and if that were *Peters* meaning, to disown him as no Member of the visible Church, and it be an Example to be imitated, then any Member discovering Hypocrisie to a discerning Spirit, might presently be disowned as no Member, which would make sad work in Churches. 3. If the Church may disown them, when they desert the Church and Covenant, then they may, yea ought to own them as Members, when they *own the Covenant*, and do not desert the Church.

I cannot but make a little pause here, before I pass on; and seriously intreat our dear Brethren, and all of their minde, to consider well how the Lord is wont to deal with his visible Church, and all the Members thereof, in the Old and New Testament, and compare therewith this their respect and care of *the Lambs of Christs Flock*. When the Lord hath once stricken *a Covenant with his People*, taking in *their seed* with the Parents, *Gen.* 17. 7. *Deut.* 29. 10, 11.

1. What *Abundant Means of their Salvation* doth he ordain, and cause diligently to be improved to that end? *Cain* and *Abel* both admitted to Sacrifice; *Abrahams* Commands were *to his whole Family-Church*, Gen. 18. The *daily ordinary Sacrifices*, and the more *solemn and extraordinary*, were for *the whole Congregation*, Lev. 4. 14, 21. Numb. 15. 24, 25. *To Israel pertain the Adoption, the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises*, Rom. 9 4. And how did the Lord follow his Church in all ages by his Prophets, to bring them to Repentance? yea, when gone after *Baal*, to reduce them by *Elijah*. How affectionately doth the Lord by them plead with his People? *Jer.* 2.

& 3. *Micah* 6. *Pſal.* 81. 8, &c. So in the New Teſtament, the *Miniſtry of the Word*, and other *Ordinances*, are given to the *Viſible Church for their Salvation*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. Epheſ. 4. 11, *&c.* and *Diſcipline* to reduce and ſave offenders.

2. Conſider the *Wonderfull Patience of God* in ſeeking the Salvation of his viſible Church. When the *children of God were ſo corrupt*, that God reſolved *to deſtroy all fleſh*; yet he ſpared them *an hundred and twenty years*, ſending *Noah a Preacher of Righteouſneſs* to ſeek their good, *Geneſ.* 6. And how great was his Patience to *Iſrael* and *Judah*, *ſending his Prophets early and late*, out of his compaſſion, *till there was no remedy*? 2 Chron. 36. So the Lord Jeſus ſent his Epiſtles *To the ſeven Churches of Aſia*, to heal their corruptions; and though he threatned to *Come quickly*, yet ſpared them many years.

3. See with what *Compaſſion and Bowels*, of humane Affections, as it were, *the Lord expreſſeth himſelf*, when he is about to caſt off a People he hath been in Covenant with: *How ſhall I give thee up, O Ephraim*? &c. *my Repentings are kindled together*, Hoſ. 11. 8. So Chriſt, *O Jeruſalem, how oft would I have gathered thee, as an Hen her Chickens*? &c. *Mat.* 23. 37. How did he *Weep over Jeruſalem, ſaying, O that thou hadſt known at leaſt in this thy day*! &c. *Luke* 19. 41. This is Gods way. But what is our *Brethrens Way* to theſe Members of the viſible Church, to whom they confeſs *the Promiſe doth belong*? Acts 2. 39.

1. Though God have ſtricken his Covenant with them, and Sealed it *To be their God*, and own them to be *His People*; yet they will not acknowledge them *Actual perſonal Members*, but in effect *Diſtinguiſh them out of the Church*.

2. They allow them no more acts of *Church-watch and Diſcipline*, then may reach an Infidel-ſervant: and *Excommunication*, the moſt effectual Ordinance of Chriſt to *Deſtroy the Fleſh, and Save the Soul*, muſt not touch them.

3. So quick they are, that if the Lord be not pleaſed to give them *Saving Faith and Grace ſo ſoon as they come to adult age*, Diſown them as *No Members*, and ſo let them go. Now how farre unlike this is to *Gods Way*, who doth not ſee? And I muſt confeſs

this is to me one great Argument, That the *Way of theſe Brethren* is not the *Way of God*.

To proceed: Our Brethren to clear this Coaſt, think fit to Anſwer *The Reaſons of the Synod to prove their Continuance in the Church*. But the Reader muſt note, That thoſe Arguments are not applied to this Propoſition in hand, here being *Eight Reaſons* to prove *They are perſonally under the Watch and Diſcipline of the Church*, which are not touched by them. But the *Reaſons* that our Brethren here ſpeak unto, are thoſe brought by the Synod to prove the laſt Branch of the ſixth Argument for the fifth Propoſition, *viz. That Church-members admitted in minority, underſtanding the Doctrine of Faith, and publickly profeſſing their Aſſent thereto; not ſcandalous in life, and ſolemnly owning the Covenant before the Church, wherein they give up themſelves and children to the Lord, and ſubject themſelves to the Government of Chriſt in the Church; That their Memberſhip ſtill continueth in adult age, and ceaſeth not with their Infancy.* And this is the rather to be noted, becauſe if their Anſwers ſuit not the caſe of ſuch perſons, then they are not pertinent to take off the Reaſons of the Synod. But let us ſee what is anſwered to theſe Reaſons (though out of their place.)

Reaſ. 1. *Becauſe in Scripture perſons are broken off onely for notorious ſins, or incorrigible impenitency and unbelief; not for growing up to adult age*, Rom 11.20.

Anſ. Our Brethren anſwer, "*Not ſimply for growing up, but for "ſuch acceſſaries as may attend adult age.* Rom. 11.20. *doth not ſay "onely for notorious ſins*, &c. *Negative unbelief, Neglecting the means "of Grace, Not Profeſſing the Faith, and the fruits thereof, may give cauſe "of breaking off. And to ſuch, though our patience and expectation ought "to be large and long, yet it may be tired out at laſt, and come to a period.*

Reply. 1. If our Brethren would but hold to this, it would tend much to our deſired Unity. For, hence it will follow, That their Memberſhip received in infancy doth continue in adult age, untill ſuch *Acceſſaries* do appear, and till the *Patience of the Church be tired out.* 2. If it were granted that *Negative unbelief*, manifeſted by *Neglect of the means of Grace, Not profeſſing the Faith, and the fruits thereof*, might, after long patience, give juſt cauſe to break them off;

off; yet, by this Rule, the persons described in the fifth Proposition cannot be said to be *broken off*, for they do *Profess the Faith, and the fruits thereof*, by a life free from Scandal, *giving up themselves to God*, and *submitting to the Government of Christ in his Church*: Or at least such as these are still objects of the Churches *Patience*, and therefore not *broken off*.

And seeing our Brethren come thus farre, I shall willingly meet them here, and confess, That if *Negative unbelief* be manifested by *Neglect of the means of Grace*, *Not professing of the Faith* (being orderly called thereunto by the Church) and *Continuance impenitently in such Neglects, after due means, with due patience used by the Church*, this would give the Church just cause to cast them out. for this were *Incorrigible Impenitency in sin*. And, Oh that we might meet here! But when I consider many other Expressions in this Treatise, I fear my desires will fail: For, if no act of Church-government may be put forth upon their persons *immediately*, but by their Parents, how shall the Church come at them, to put them upon such Duties, and deal with them for their Neglect thereof? and when their Parents be dead, what shall the Church do then? and when their Membership is owned onely in general, as *wrapped up in their Parents*, not *actual* or *personal*; yea, when their *Personal* or *Fœderal Holiness* is denied to continue in adult age? These, and the like Passages, *Pag.* 23, 25, 37. and in other places, do make me fear, that our Brethren will not hold to their Expressions in this place.

Reply 2. Although *Rom.* 11. 20. saith, *Not onely for notorious sins*, &c. yet it sheweth how the Jews were broken off, which we know was for *Notorious sins*, and *Incorrigible Impenitency*, and *Unbelief*. And let any shew, that any have been *broken off*, or by Rule may be so, for *Negative unbelief*, without *Impenitency* added. The contrary we finde 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *Mat.* 21. 43. *Acts* 13. 45, 46. & 18. 6. & 19. 8.

Real. 2. *The Jewish children circumcised, did not cease to be Members by growing up to adult age, but continued in the Church, and were bound to the Duties of Members*, Deut. 26. 2---10. & 16. 16-17. *Gal.* 5 3.

" Ans. *The circumcised Jews did not cease to be Members simply for*

" *growing up, but for growing out of kinde.* Jer.2.21. *They became de-*
" *generate Plants.* Amos 9.7. *Children of the Negroes; Baſtard*
" *Branches to be cut off,* Joh.15. 2.

Reſ l. There is a double great miſtake in applying theſe Scriptures. 1. They do not ſpeak of perſons *ceaſing to be Members.* As for *Jer.* 2. it was the *Word of the Lord to Jeruſalem,* ver.2. and that in *the thirteenth year of Joſiah,* after the Covenant was renewed, and Religion greatly Reformed; and God calls them *His People,* ver. 11,13 and therefore their Memberſhip ceaſed not at that time. So *Amos* 9. He Propheſied *in the dayes of* UZZiah *King of Judah, and Joaſh the ſon of Jeroboam King of Iſrael,* in whoſe dayes God had not yet *removed Iſrael out of his ſight.* As for *Joh.*15.2. though the Lord doth in his time cut off *unfruitful Branches* by Death, or Church-cenſures, yet till he doth ſo, they are expreſly ſaid to be *in Chriſt.* So that theſe places ſpeak nothing of *the ceaſing of Church-memberſhip in adult age.*

2. Theſe places do not ſuit the perſons in the fifth Propoſition. *Jer.* 2. ſpeaketh of ſuch as *Propheſied by Baal; That played the harlot on every high hill,* ver.20. and are therefore called *A degenerate plant,* ver.21. *Amos* ſpeaketh of Iſrael in the corrupt times of Idolatry, and reproves their great *Covetouſneſs and Oppreſſion,* Chap. 8. 4, 5. And therefore if ſuch as thoſe had *ceaſed to be Members in adult age,* it doth not follow that the Memberſhip of theſe in queſtion doth ceaſe.

What is here added about the phraſe of *Entring into Covenant,* is a miſtake: for, the Synod ſpeaks of *Entring into a new Memberſhip,* not denying the phraſe of *Entring into,* or *Renewing the Covenant.*

Reaſ. 3. *Thoſe Relations of Bond-ſervants and Subjects, which the Scripture maketh uſe of to ſet forth the ſtate of the children of the Church by,* Levit. 25.41,42. Ezek.37.25. *do not ceaſe with Infancy, but continue in adult age, whereby they are engaged to duty when they are moſt fit for it. So here.*

" Anſ.1. *The Relation of the Son of the Bond-woman may ceaſe in*
" *adult age, as* Iſhmael; *much more of the Bond-ſervant.*

Reply. The Relation of *Iſhmael* ceaſed not by growing up to adult

adult age, nor till he was caſt out for his ſin. Theſe in queſtion are not *caſt out*, or deſerving ſo to be: and therefore this Anſwer is impertinent.

" Anſ. 2. *By this Reaſon, Moral wickedneſs ſhould not cut off adult* " *Members, for that doth not cut off the Relation of Bond-ſervants.*

Repl. This Argument taken from the common nature of Civil and Church-Societies, doth not require they ſhould hold in all things; as, that they ſhould be governed by the ſame Laws, and ſubject to the ſame Puniſhments: that were indeed to make *Similitudes run on all four* (as we ſay.) It is enough if they agree in that thing wherein they are applied. And this Application of the Synod is clear in *Levit.* 25.41,42. where the children of the Iſraelitiſh Servants were to *ſerve with their parents unto the year o Jubile*, which being every Fiftieth Year, they were oft grown up to adult age before that time: And the reaſon why they ſhould then go out, is, *Becauſe they* (that is, Parents and Children) *are my Servants, ſaith the Lord.* So that there is the like reaſon in Gods Service, as in that Relation. And we ſee *David* delighteth to own himſelf *the Servant of the Lord* in this very Relation: *I am thy Servant, the Son of thine Handmaid*, Pſal. 116.16. that is, engaged to the Service of God from his Birth, and ſo for ever, as the Son of the Handmaid was, *Exod.* 21.4. And yet if the Similitude ſhould be preſſed ſo farre, we know that the *Moral Wickedneſs* of Murther, Adultery, and the like, would cut off Servants and Subjects by Death, according to the Law of God.

Reaſ. 4. *There is no ordinary way of ceſſation of Church-membership but by Death, Diſmiſſion, Excommunication, or Diſſolution of the Society; none of which is the caſe of the children in queſtion.*

" Anſ 1. *This is to be underſtood of Members in full communion,* " *which theſe adult children are not.*

Reply. If none of theſe belong to ſuch adult children, to cauſe their Membership to ceaſe; then by their judgement, it ſeems, they have no Membership at all, if neither *Death*, nor *Diſſolution of the Society*, can cauſe it to ceaſe: which before they ſeemed not to own.

" Anſ. 2. *There are many other wayes of the ceſſation of Church-*

members;

" *members*; *they may Excommunicate themſelves* (*as Mr.* Cotton, *The* " *Aſſembly at the* Savoy, *and Dr.* Ames *affirm.*) *Alſo by Withdrawing*; " *ſometimes commanded of God*, 2 Tim. 3.5. Rom 16.17. *Alſo by* " *Apoſtacy*, 1 Joh. 2.19. *By Hereſie, as Arrians, Quakers*, &c.

Reply. 1. If theſe adult children may *Excommunicate themſelves*, then it is yielded that they are Members in adult age. But if all theſe were granted, yet none of them is the caſe of theſe in the fifth Propoſition.

2. Here is a needleſs multiplying of particulars: All, but a ſuppoſed *Lawful Withdrawing*, are Subjects of Excommunication, as ſhall be proved. Concerning a *Lawful Withdrawing*, that *Turning away from ſuch*, 2 Tim. 3.5. and *Avoiding thoſe*, Rom. 16.17. may more fitly be underſtood to be done, by not admitting them into the Church, or caſting them out if they be in; rather then by *Withdrawing from the Church it ſelf for their ſakes*, which cannot be done without Schiſm, except many Cautions be uſed. Neither can ſuch *Withdrawing* looſen a man's Relation to the Church, which no doubt may call him to account for it, and he is bound to *render a reaſon thereof*; elſe all Diſcipline may hereby be made fruſtrate. Now if his *Reaſons* be found juſt, it will be all one with a *Diſmiſſion*.

3. Concerning this *Self-Excommunication*: 1. The ordinary inſtances of *Cain*, *Iſhmael*, *Eſau*, are not clear that they did *Excommunicate themſelves*, but were *caſt out by the Lord*. The Curſe of *Cain*, was to be *A Vagabond and Fugitive in the earth*; which he underſtood of his caſting out of the Church, *From thy face ſhall I be hid*, Gen. 4.14. As for *Iſhmael*, the caſe is plain that he was caſt out by *Abraham*, the Governour of the Church, by the appointment of God. And of *Eſau* it is expreſly ſaid, that *when he would have inherited the Bleſſing, he was rejected*, viz. of *Iſaac*; after which rejection, he went away from the Church in *Iſaac*'s Family. Concerning the inſtance of *the Sons of Abraham by Keturah*, how long they continued to Worſhip the true God, or how they fell off, who can ſay, or prove that they *Excommunicated themſelves*, without any act of God that had the nature of ſuch a Cenſure? As for *Open and Obſtinate Hereticks and Apoſtates*, which ſome call *Excommunicati de Jure*, that hindreth not but that they may, and ought to be Excommunicated

municated in Fact alſo. But if we ſpeak of Goſpel-times, wherein the Lord Jeſus hath ſo expreſly inſtituted Church-cenſures, for the ſaving of Offenders, and purging of his Churches; and hath confirmed the ſame with ſuch Promiſes, to *Binde and Looſe in Heaven, what is Bound and Looſed on Earth*, Mat. 18. I conceive (with due reſpect to the Authors alledged) That no Member of a particular Church (having the Power and Exerciſe of Church-Diſcipline) can ſo cut off his Relation to that Church actually, but that the Church may, and ought to diſpenſe the Cenſures to him, as the caſe ſhall require. My Reaſons are:

1. From the Ends of Church-Diſcipline; *viz. To reduce and ſave Offenders*, Mat. 18. 1 Cor. 5.5. *To purge the Church*, 1 Cor. 5.7. *To vindicate the Name and Glory of God, in bearing full teſtimony againſt Scandals*, 2 Sam. 12 14. 2 Cor. 7. 11. *You have approved your ſelves to be clear in this matter: For the Example and Terrour of others*, 1 Tim. 5.20. Whence the Reaſon ſtands thus: *Reaſon* 1.

If the Lord Jeſus hath betruſted his Church with the Power of Church-Diſcipline for theſe and the like Ends; then it is the duty of the Church to put forth this Power whenſoever theſe, or any of theſe ends may be attained with the Edification of the Church. But there is no caſe can befall any Church-member, wherein theſe, or ſome of theſe ends may not be attained. For, put caſe a Member be turned *Arrian*, *Quaker*, *Turk*, and what you will; yet the Cenſure denounced will *Acquit the Church*, *Vindicate the Name and Glory of God, in bearing full teſtimony againſt ſuch Scandals*, and *tend to the Terrour of others*: yea, who knoweth how farre the Lord may improve it upon the ſinner for his good?

2. If in Scripture-patterns, the worſt of Hereticks and Blaſphemers were laid under Cenſures, notwithſtanding their ſuppoſed *Self-Excommunication*, then we ought to follow ſuch Patterns in all ſuch caſes. But ſuch was the Practice in Scripture-examples, *Tit.* 3.10. 1 *Tim.* 1.20. 1 *Cor.* 16.22. Therefore, *&c.* *Reaſon* 2.

3. That Poſition that openeth a door for Church-members to evade and fruſtrate Church-Diſcipline, is not to be admitted. But this Poſition doth open a door to evade and fruſtrate Church-Diſcipline. For, by this means, any Member in danger of Church- *Reaſon* 3.

cenſures may *Withdraw himſelf*; *Renounce the Church*, and then they cannot proceed againſt him: for, it were in vain to cut off a Member that hath already *Excommunicated himſelf*. If any ſhall ſay, *It is ſufficient puniſhment and judgement of God, to leave a man ſo to Excommunicate himſelf*. *Anſ.* But how then ſhall the Church be diſcharged of their duty to *ſave the Offender by Excommunication*, that tends *to deſtroy the fleſh*, and *ſave his Soul?* I never read that God bleſſed *Self-Excommunication* to that end. Yea, by this Poſition, a wicked Schiſmatical Member ſhall take the Keyes out of the hands of the Church, and Cenſure the whole Church, (as oft they do) and the Church hath no Power to lay any Puniſhment upon him for it.

And hence thoſe Scriptures alledged *Hebr.* 10.21. 1 *John* 2.19. may receive a juſt Anſwer; for, that *Forſaking of the aſſembling of themſelves*, and *Going out*, doth not exempt them from Church-cenſures, or prove that they were *out off* before Church-cenſures. *If the foot ſaith, I am not of the Body, is it therefore not of the Body?* Or can this *Withdrawing* diſcharge the Church from uſing the means of their recovery, or exempt themſelves from the juſt Cenſure and Puniſhment appointed by Chriſt for ſuch Offenders?

Reaſ. 5. *Theſe adult perſons are Members or Non-members; if Non-members, then a perſon admitted a Member, and ſealed by Baptiſm, not caſt out, nor deſerving ſo to be, may (the Church ſtill remaining) become a Non-member, out of the Church, and of the unclean world: which the Scripture acknowledgeth not.*

" Anſ. 1. *Members and Non-members are not oppoſites, but with* " *taking in the conditions of all oppoſites, as in this caſe* (ad idem, *or in* " *the ſame reſpect*) *they may be Non-members in full communion, and* " *yet Members in Parental Right.*

Reply. 1. This Diſtinction is not *ad idem*; for the want of full Communion is not ſuch a reſpect as makes a man a Non-member, for ſo a man under Admonition for ſome Scandal, or in a Frenzy, ſhould be a Non-member. 2. The queſtion is not, *Whether theſe be Members in full Communion?* but, *Whether that Membership which was ſealed up unto them in Baptiſm, doth continue in adult age?* And this ſeems once more here to be granted.

" Anſ.

"Anſ. 2. *They may deſerve Cenſures, though not put upon them.*

Reply. This is not the caſe of theſe Members in queſtion: And if it were ſo, that they *deſerved Cenſures*, yet no man is actually cut off, till the Cenſure be applied. And, if *they may deſerve Cenſures*, then are they Perſonal Members under Church-Diſcipline.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the fourth Propoſition.

Propoſ. 4. *THeſe adult perſons are not therefore to be admitted to full Communion, meerly becauſe they are, and continue Members, without ſuch further Qualifications as the Word of God requireth thereunto.*

Our Brethren granting this Propoſition, yet in reference to the fifth Propoſition, are pleaſed by way of Prevention to ſtate this Queſtion; *viz.* "*Whether there are, or ſhould be in the Church, ſuch* "*perſons as have publickly and perſonally Covenanted, that are not in* "*full Communion?* The Negative they prove:

Reaſ. 1. "*Becauſe publick and perſonal Covenanting is the forma-* "*lity of a Church-member; ſuch have all the conſtituent cauſes, and ſo* "*all the conſequences of the Form, and all the priviledges of that Subject,* "*which in this caſe is full Communion. Hence the Form introduced, and* "*the Covenant perſonally owned, doth neceſſarily imply all the priviledges* "*belonging thereunto.*

Anſ. Every *Publick and Perſonal Covenanting is not the Form of Church-membership.* The Covenant was oft renewed, publickly owned, or Entred into, by ſuch as were Members of the Church before; as in *Deut.* 29. and other Scriptures, doth appear. And this is the caſe of theſe in queſtion, who were in Covenant with God and his Church, and had the *Seal of Baptiſm ſet thereto* before, *Geneſ.*

17.7. 1 *Cor.*12.13. and therefore this *Owning of the Covenant*, is onely a manifestation of their continuance in it. And hence this is not the *Form of their Membership*, but a Duty of their Covenant, and doth not in it self fit them for full Communion, except withall they hold out such *Qualifications as the Word of God requireth thereunto*. A Youth that hath the constituent causes of a Man, Soul and Body, with some Understanding and Reason, is not thereby capable of all Priviledges of a man; as, To Marry, Give good Assurances of Lands, and the like. An adult person received into the Church by personal Covenant, is not fit for the Lords Supper meerly becaufe he hath Covenanted, for except he hath suitable qualifications, he will *Eat judgement to himself*.

Reas. 2. "*Because those that were admitted by personal Covenant in* "*the Primitive Church, continued in full Communion*, Acts 2.41.

Ans. There is not the same reason; for they were admitted in adult age, and also indued with eminent Gifts of the Holy Ghost: These being admitted in Infancy, do onely by *Owning the Covenant*, manifest their continuance therein. The *Indians* newly converted, and holding forth so much Faith and Repentance as may admit them into the Church and Baptism, might yet need further Preparation to the Lords Supper, not having such eminent gifts.

Reas. 3. "*Because this Doctrine presupposeth, that what Know-* "*ledge, Faith and Repentance is required in adult persons coming to* "*Baptism, is not sufficient to the Lords Supper.*

Ans. This Doctrine doth not suppose it; for it speaketh onely of such adult persons as were Baptized in infancy, not to be Baptized in adult age. It supposeth onely that persons Baptized in infancy, and continuing in the Covenant, and visible Church, may yet be unable to *Examine themselves, and discern the Lords Body*. And hence the Reasons which here follow, touch not this case. And it is well if some of them do not argue *Against the Baptizing of Infants*; or, *That Infants Baptized may partake of the Lords Supper.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Concerning the fifth Propoſition.

Propoſ. 5. *CHurch-members who were admitted in minority, underſtanding the Doctrine of Faith, and publickly profeſſing their Aſſent thereto; not ſcandalous in life, and ſolemnly owning the Covenant before the Church, wherein they give up themſelves and their children to the Lord, and ſubject themſelves to the Government of Chriſt in the Church, their children are to be Baptized.*

" *This Propoſition* (ſay our Brethren) *doth ſtumble us moſt.* Their Reaſons are:

Reaſ. 1. " *Becauſe, there being three Expreſſions propounded, this* " *ſwerveth further then the other from the Scripture.*

Anſ. Be it granted, that ſeveral terms and expreſſions of theſe Qualifications were propounded; theſe onely in concluſion were Aſſented unto. But if our Brethren judge, *That they all ſwerved from the Scripture*, what matter is it *which ſwerved moſt from it?* If this *ſwerveth moſt*, they have the more advantage of Diſpute againſt it. But ſeeing they *ſtumble* ſo much at this, I ſhall eaſily remove this Block out of their way.

Obj. " *Firſt*, ſay they, *in the former Expreſſions it was required,* " *they ſhould underſtand the Grounds of Religion; here, no more then* " *the Doctrine of Faith: So that they may be ignorant of the Doctrine of* " *the Moral Law, and ſo have no knowledge of Sin, of the Duties of* " *Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, Sabbaths*, &c.

Anſ. As if the *Doctrine of Faith* were not as large as all the *Grounds of Religion*, both in the acceptation of Scripture, and of Orthodox Divines. *Phil.* 1.27. when the Apoſtle exhorts them to *ſtrive for the Faith of the Goſpel*, might they let go the Doctrine of

the Moral Law, or any other Grounds of Religion? 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. when *Paul* ſaith, *He had kept the Faith*, did he let go the Doctrine of the Moral Law, and other Grounds of Religion? *Jude* ver. 3. *Contend for the Faith*; was not *that Faith* oppoſed to the *filthy Dreamers* that ſinned againſt the Moral Law? and therefore ſurely *the Doctrine of Faith* comprehends *the Doctrine of the Moral Law.* When our Synod at *Cambridge* 1648. declared their Conſent with the Aſſembly of Divines in *England*, in *The Doctrine of Faith*; and the Aſſembly at the *Savoy* calleth that Book *A Declaration of their Faith and Order*; do they not mean by the word *Faith*, all the Grounds of Religion, excepting onely matters of *Order*? But what need more Inſtances, when the Preface to this Book telleth the world of *a few Names that are ſtedfaſt in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel?* I dare not be ſo uncharitable, to think, that ſuch perſons do not hold faſt *The Doctrine of the Moral Law*, and all *The Grounds of Religion.* Surely the Synod intended it ſo.

Obj. 2. "*In the ſecond Expreſſion it was required, that they ſhould* "*be Examined of their ſenſe of their need of Chriſt, and deſires after* "*him*; *here, only of their Aſſent to the Doctrine of Faith, which the* "*Devils may have.*

Anſ. But if ſuch *ſenſe of their need of Chriſt, and deſires after him*, ſhould not, upon ſuch Examination, appear, but this *Aſſent to the Doctrine of Faith*, with all the other Qualifications; Might not this ſuffice to ſhew *their Continuance in the viſible Church?* What if the Devils may give an *Aſſent* to the Truth? it is not free, but inforced; and they want all the other Qualifications, that theſe have.

Obj. 3. "*The former required, that they ſhould give Satisfaction for* "*any Offence they had fallen into*; *here, onely that they are not Scand-* "*lous in life. The former*, viz. *Offences, comprehend Original Sin,* "*or any other committed againſt God or man*, Jam. 3 2. *Scandal in* "*life, noteth onely Notorious ſins, and a courſe therein.*

Anſ. That they *ſtumble* at this, muſt needs ariſe from a very rigid Principle (whereof this Treatiſe hath too many) For, who ever took up that of *Original Sin*, as matter of offence to deal with his Brother for it? Or what Rule have we to call for *Satisfaction* for that, or for all ſuch Words or Actions as are *Offences to God or*

man

man? A practice that the Apoſtle condemneth in that very place alledged, *Jam.*3 1. *Be not many maſters; for in many things we offend all:* and therefore pity, and bear with one another, and be not ſo rigid to require Satisfaction for every Offence. If this were not ſo, what uſe were there of thoſe Rules of Love, 1 *Cor.*13.7. *Love beareth all things.* Gal.6.2. *Bear one anothers burthens.* Col.3.13. *Forbearing one another?*

2. It is evident *Luke* 17.1,2,3. that Offences to be dealt with are Scandals: *Woe to him that ſcandalizeth one of theſe little ones*; and Impenitency in any ſuch Scandal deſerveth the higheſt Cenſure, but repented of, ceaſeth to be a Scandal or Offence, *Mat.*18. yea, although ſuch a Scandal ſhould not be a notorious ſin, nor continued in but in one act: So that *Not to be ſcandalous in life*, is full as large as that other Expreſſion, and doth include *Satisfaction for Offences that are fallen into.*

Obj. 4. "*In the former was ſaid, They ſhould own the Covenant* "*of their Parents*; *here, onely the Covenant: which may extend to* "*Grandfathers*, &c.

Anſ. I wonder how our Brethren could make to themſelves ſuch a Block as this is to *ſtumble* upon, when-as the Doctrine of the Synod is ſo expreſs to the contrary in the ſecond Propoſition, which affirmeth, That this right in the Covenant is conveyed onely by the *next Parents*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. If men have a luſt to contend, and raiſe Objections, they might as well have objected againſt the former phraſe, *The Covenant of their Parents*; for are not Grandfathers *Parents* alſo?

"*Theſe things* (ſay our Brethren) *thus weighed, may ſuffice to diſ-* "*cover, whether there be not juſt cauſe for us to deny our Conſent to* "*ſuch kinde of Members as theſe.*

Anſ. But theſe things weighed over again by the equal Ballance of the Sanctuary, and right Reaſon, I doubt not but the Judicious Reader will ſee how light they are, and unworthy to ſway the Judgements of ſuch as our Brethren are. But they adde (as they had need) other Reaſons of their Deniall.

Reaſ. 2. "*Becauſe this croſſeth the two former Propoſitions, which* "*make the proper Subjects of Baptiſm, Confederate viſible Believers and*

their,

" *their ſeed: whereas theſe, though ſo qualified, are not (neither Parents*
" *nor Children) viſible Believers; for the vileſt perſons may have theſe,*
" Rom. 2. 18. & 10 19, 21. *yea, they that commit the ſin unto Death*
" *may have theſe,* Heb. 10. 26. *There are waſhed Swine,* 2 Pet. 2.
" 20, &c.

Anſ. 1. Theſe Parents are *Confederate viſible Believers,* as hath been proved. They are in Covenant with God, He is *their God,* God accepteth them as *His People, His Children*; the Lord hath ſealed to them the *Righteouſneſs of Faith,* Baptized them *into Chriſt,* and they *Own this God, Submit to his Rules,* &c. and therefore in Eccleſiaſtical account they are viſible Believers.

2. Here is a very palpable Fallacy in citing theſe Scriptures to prove the contrary. *The vileſt perſons* (ſay they) *may have theſe:* Indeed the Scriptures prove that ſome vile perſons may have ſome *one* of theſe; as *Rom.* 2. proveth, that wicked men may have *knowledge*; but theſe have *knowledge,* and alſo *Not ſcandalous in life,* &c. and ſo may be ſaid of the reſt. But which of theſe, or any other, doth prove, That ſuch perſons as have all theſe Qualifications conjunctly, are *vile perſons,* or not viſible Believers in Eccleſiaſtical account, or in Scripture account, and not true Members of the viſible Church? It is true, that ſuch as theſe may *fall away,* and become *vile,* Heb. 10 26. but may not ſuch as come into the Church by the faireſt Profeſſion of Faith, prove ſo *vile* alſo? and were they therefore no *viſible Believers* before ſuch a fall?

3. Theſe very Scriptures, or moſt of them here alledged, ſpeak of ſuch perſons (though ſo *vile,* as is ſaid) who being adult children of the Church, did yet continue Members of the viſible Church, and they and their ſeed partake of Priviledges; and therefore ſuch Scriptures cannot reach this caſe, to diſprove the Membership of theſe in the viſible Church, becauſe they are not viſible Believers, theſe being farre better Members then thoſe were: and I wonder that our Brethren do not obſerve it; or if they do, why ſhould they alledge ſuch Scriptures in this caſe?

" Object. *But their giving up of themſelves and their children to*
" *God, implies Faith,* 2 Cor. 8. 5.

" *Anſ.* Our Brethren grant, *that it may imply Faith, but in perſons*

no

" *no better qualified it cannot imply it. There is a giving up of the First-*
" *born of man and beast to God*, Exod.13.2,12. & 22.29.

Reply. To say, *That in such persons no better qualified it cannot imply Faith*, and that without any Reason rendred, is against the Rule of *Love*, that *hopeth all things* to be hoped, as this is confessed to be, *viz.* that *it may imply it*. No doubt, a person thus qualified in *Knowledge* and *Conversation*, may give up himself to God in such a manner, that the most discerning Church would receive him as a true visible Believer into full Communion regularly. The Eunuch's Confession, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, was justly taken for true Faith. To say, *There is a giving up of the First-born of man and beast to God* (if it be not a Scoff) it argueth a very slight thought of so solemn a Profession before God and his People: for what Comparison is there between these two?

Reas. 3. " *Where there is no Fœderal Holiness, there is no right to*
" *Baptism. But where neither Parent is a Believer, there is no Cove-*
" *nant-holiness*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. *where not onely one of the Parents must*
" *be in Covenant, but a Believer, that the children be fœderally holy.*
" *Neither is it rightly Objected, That a Believer is opposed there to an*
" *Infidel: for the children were not upon their ceasing to be Infidels, Be-*
" *lievers: So that themselves were Believers, or their children fœderally*
" *holy; They were* Catechumeni, *and* Competentes, *before* Fi-
" deles.

Ans. 1. Did the Primitive Churches receive any that were not visible Believers into the Churches? Surely in the Apostles account *The Church of God*, and *Sanctified in Christ Jesus*, is all one, 1 *Cor.* 1.2. So the Church of *Ephesus* and *Colosse*, are called *Saints*, and *Faithfull in Christ*, Ephes. 1 1. Col. 1 2. Why then is it said, that *the Parents must be not onely in Church-covenant, but also Believers?* as if the one did not necessarily suppose and infer the other.

2. That it is rightly said, *That in ceasing to be Infidels they were Believers in Ecclesiastical account*, is evident, in that Infidels and Unbelievers are the same in Scripture-phrase, and both opposed to Believers, 2 *Cor.* 6.14, 15. *Be not unequally yoked with Unbelievers*, that is, with Infidels, as appeareth *ver.* 15. *What part hath a Believer with an Infidel?* Now I appeal to our Brethren, whether this Rule

of the Apoſtle would allow the Parents in queſtion deſcribed in the fifth Propoſition, to Marry with an Heathen, Indian, or like Infidel; if not, then in the Scripture account he is a Believer, for otherwiſe he ſhould not be *unequally yoked* with ſuch an one.

3. As for that Diſtinction of *Catechumeni*, *Competentes*, and *Fideles*, the Scripture knoweth no ſuch thing; for, *Lydia and her houſe were Baptized together*, Acts 16.15. and the Jaylor and his houſe *ſtraightway*. That diſtinction came into the Church afterward, and was applied to new Converts, as well as to the Church-ſeed.

But our Brethren adde further, " *That elſe, or otherwiſe were your* " *children unclean, cannot be meant onely of Infidels; for ſo we may* " *make mad work of Scripture: as* Deut. 4.29. *Jehovah is God, and* " *none elſe; if any ſhould ſay, There may be another God to the Gen-* " *tiles, it would be a ſad Exception:* So Rev. 2.15. *Repent, or I* " *will come againſt thee; ſhall another Church ſay, It will not be ſo* " *with us?*

Anſ. That to be *Unclean*, is meant the uncleanneſs of Infidels, is clear by the Rule of Contraries. For, if *to be holy*, be meant of *the holineſs of the Covenant*; then *to be unclean*, is the uncleanneſs of ſuch as are *ſtrangers from the Covenant*, and ſo *without God in the world*, that is, Infidels, *Eph.* 2.12. And what are the children of ſuch as have both Parents *Unbelievers*, but Infidels in the Apoſtles ſenſe? But for that inference, That by like reaſon might be inferred from that propoſition, *There is no God elſe*, that *There may be another God to the Gentiles*; I confeſs my ſhallow underſtanding cannot ſee any Compariſon between thoſe two propoſitions, but onely that the word *Elſe* is in them both; the one being a disjunct Axiome, *Your children are clean*, or *elſe unclean*, and the other a ſimple Axiome, where the word *Elſe* is of another uſe and ſenſe then in the former. But be it ſo, that it is ſo *ſad an Exception* from a general propoſition, *Jehovah is God, and none elſe*, to ſay, *Yet there may be another God to the Gentiles*; or to ſay, The threatnings of Chriſt to the Churches *yet belong not to us*: Our Brethren may then conſider, when the Apoſtle ſaith of Church-members, *Your children are holy*, to make ſuch an Exception, and ſay, *Not ſo, but onely the children*

of

of Members in full Communion are holy, whether this be not a ſad Exception alſo.

Reaſ. 4. "*The being in Covenant doth not priviledge to Baptiſm,* "*without viſible Repentance in Parents*, Acts 2. 38,39. *The Jews* "*were in Covenant, and pricked to the heart, yet they were openly called* "*to Repent: So* John Baptiſt *thought*, Mat. 3. 8,9.

Anſ. 1. The Jews being in Covenant did priviledge their children to the Benefits of that Covenant they were in, *viz.* Circumciſion, the Sacrifices, *&c. Rom.* 3. 1,2,3. But there was great reaſon they ſhould be called to Repentance, when they were to enter into the Goſpel-diſpenſation of the Covenant, becauſe the Church of the Jews was grown ſo corrupt; and thoſe in *Acts* 2. being guilty of the Blood of the Son of God: and hence *John* was ſent to prepare a people for the Lord by the Doctrine of Repentance. But when *Philip* had to do with the Eunuch, a godly Proſelyte, he onely called him to Faith in the Perſon of Chriſt as the Son of God.

2. Though Faith and Repentance, in a viſible Profeſſion thereof, be required at the firſt admiſſion into the Church; yet theſe are not required in the ſame manner in perſons regularly admitted, to priviledge their ſeed to Baptiſm. What Rule or Example requireth a Church-member to make Profeſſion of viſible Faith and Repentance, ſo oft as he hath a childe to be Baptized? Or in caſe a Church-member declineth, and giveth cauſe of much doubt of the ſoundneſs of his Faith and Repentance; What Rule will debarre his childe from Baptiſm, ſo long as he continueth a Member of the Church? Now our queſtion is of *Perſons regularly admited, and continuing in the Church.*

Reaſ. 5. "*The Covenant is limited to ſuch as obey God, and there-* "*fore the Priviledges of the Covenant*, Deut. 7. 9. Neh. 1. 5. Dan. "9. 5. *He keepeth Covenant and Mercy to them that love him.*

Anſ. This is a frequent Miſtake, to apply that which is ſpoken of *the ſaving Benefits of the Covenant*, to *the Outward Priviledges thereof*; the firſt God performs to ſuch as love and obey him ſincerely, yet the other he continueth to all ſuch as do not fall away from the Outward Profeſſion of the Covenant. Take theſe Scri-

ptures named: Did not Church-priviledges belong to all Iſrael, when *Moſes* ſpake that word, *Deut.*7.9. that *God keepeth Mercy and Covenant to them that love him?* and yet he giveth a ſad teſtimony of them, *Chap.*9.24. *You have been rebellious againſt the Lord ever ſince I knew you.* So in *Nehemiah* time, did not all that were of the *holy ſeed* enjoy Church-priviledges, when *Nehemiah* ſpake that word, *Chap.*1.5? and yet the ſtory ſpeaketh of many evils amongſt them, that ſhew they were Scandalous in life, which theſe are not, and have many other good Qualifications beſides that alſo.

Reaſ. 6. "*From the tenour and manner of the Covenant made with*
"Abraham, *Nehem.*9.8. *when God ſaw his heart faithful before him.*
"So Gen.17.1,7. *Walk before me, and be upright, and I will be a God*
"*to thee and thy ſeed*, &c.

Anſ. This is the ſame Reaſon with the former, built upon the ſame Miſtake, and may have the ſame Anſwer. I readily grant, That all that Enter into Covenant with God ought to *Love him, Obey him, Walk uprightly before him:* and what is ſaid *Gal.* 3. 7, 9. that *They that are of the Faith, are bleſſed with faithful Abraham:* Faith and Holineſs is the duty of every Church-member, for want whereof he falleth ſhort of all the Saving Bleſſings of the Covenant. But doth it follow, that ſuch as are in Church-covenant, and do not perform theſe Duties, are thereby deprived of the Outward Priviledges and the Means of Grace, and that before they be regularly caſt out of the Church? Were there not many corrupt Members in the Church, not onely of Iſrael, but alſo in Goſpel-Churches, as of *Corinth, Galatia*, the *Churches of Aſia*, Rev.2. & 3. who did enjoy Church-priviledges, till they were caſt out, or till God actually *Removed their Candleſticks?* It was indeed a ſin reproved to *ſuffer ſuch*, but ſo long as they were ſuffered, they regularly enjoyed the Outward Priviledges.

Here our Brethren endeavour to Anſwer two Objections.

Obj 1. "*The Covenant-Bleſſing was conveyed with Circumciſion*
"*ſucceſſively to the following generations.*

Anſ. "*We muſt conſider, that* Gal.3.14. *that is expreſſed to be the*
"*Bleſſing of* Abraham *that ſhould come upon the Gentiles, not the Co-*
"*venant of* Jacob (*as Mr.* Cotton *hath judiciouſly noted upon the*
place.)

" place.) *Now* Abrahams *Covenant, and the Bleſſing thereof, is confirmed* " *onely to thoſe that walk uprightly with God, as* Abraham *did.*

Reply. That difference Mr. *Cotton* put between the Bleſſing of *Abraham* and *Jacob*, may hold in this, That God continued all the Sons of *Jacob*, and their Poſterity, in the Covenant; not ſo of *Abraham*: *Iſhmael* and his ſeed, and the Sons of *Keturah*, were not ſo; and ſo *Eſau* and his ſeed, being the Poſterity of *Iſaac*, were rejected. And that ſeemeth to be the meaning of that ſpeech of *Jacob*, Gen 49 26. that *His bleſſing prevailed above the bleſſing of his Progenitors.* But this difference cannot hold in reſpect of the tenour of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*; for *Iſhmael*, though graceleſs, was taken into *Abrahams* Covenant, and continued in it, till for his ſin he was caſt out. So *Eſau* in Covenant, till for his *Profaneneſs he was rejected*, Heb. 12. Was not the continuance of the Covenant to the ſeed of *Jacob*, the performance of Gods *Everlaſting Covenant* made with *Abraham*, to *be a God to his ſeed after him in their generations?* as is evident, *Exod.* 3. 15. & 6. 3, 4. Was there ever any Covenant made with *Jacob* and his ſeed, upon any other terms then the Covenant of *Abraham?* Did not the Lord require Faith and Holineſs of the Poſterity of *Jacob*, as he did of the ſeed of *Abraham?* and therefore this is nothing to hinder the continual ſucceſſion of the *Covenant of Abraham in the Gentile Churches.* } N.

Obj. 2. " *It will be ſaid, God promiſed that he would be a God to him* " *and his ſeed in their generations, for an everlaſting Covenant.*

Anſ. " *Is it that all the carnall ſeed of* Abraham, *in all ſucceeding* " *generations, ſhould have God to be their God? Then the Jews are not* " *yet broken off; contrary to* Rom. 11. *This ſeed is* 1. *Onely ſuch of* " *the carnall ſeed with whom the Covenant was eſtabliſhed, by walking in* " *the ſteps of* Abrahams *Faith.* 2. *His ſpirituall ſeed, who are onely* " *meant in that Everlaſting covenant.*

Reply. 1. It is granted, that the Outward Diſpenſation of the Covenant is not *Abſolute*, but *Conditionall*, in reſpect of the ſucceſſion thereof: The Lord is ever mindful of his Covenant, and that everlaſtingly; till his People break his Covenant, he never caſts them out. But there are many tranſgreſſions againſt the Covenant, that

do not break off a People from the visible Covenant, and the Priviledges thereof: and therefore so long as the Lord doth not cast them out of the visible Church (wherein his patience is very long) the Priviledges thereof continue to their succeeding generations everlastingly, even to such as are here called *the Carnall seed.*

2. It doth not savour well, that our Brethren so frequently call the Church-seed *A Carnall seed:* We know whose Phrase it is, and to what it tendeth, even *To deny Baptism to them.* The Scripture calls them *The holy Seed, An holy Nation, Royall Priesthood,* &c. *Your children are holy,* 1 Cor.7.14. God never enters into covenant with any as a *Carnall seed,* but as *an holy People to the Lord.*

3. What difference is there between the *Carnall seed* walking in the Faith of *Abraham,* and his *Spirituall seed?* If the *Everlasting Covenant* belong onely to such, then the Priviledges of the Covenant belong not to any Church-member, till he come up to *Walk in the Faith of Abraham,* which is the Tenent of (we know whom.)

Reas. 7. "*It is irregular to receive persons with no better Qualifi-*
"*cations into Covenant; we mean, Ignorant, unbelieving, and impeni-*
"*tent persons, into Publick and Personal Covenant. Church-covenan-*
"*ters must be visible Saints,* Psal.50.5,16. *Faith, Repentance and Obe-*
"*dience are required to Covenant with God. It is a palpable untruth for*
"*an Unbeliever to engage himself to keep the Lords Covenant, whereof*
"*Faith is the condition,* Joh.3.16.

Ans. 1. It is a great Mistake, to think these in question are to be received into the Covenant, when they come to own their Baptismal Covenant publickly. Our Brethren confess *they are in Covenant,* Acts 2. which is Sealed up to them by Baptism, and that in their own persons, as was before proved from *Deut.*5.2,3. & 29.10, 11,12. This Publick *Owning of the Covenant,* is but the manifestation of their continuance in it, or a renewing of it.

2. To censure these for *Ignorant persons,* that understand the Doctrine of Faith, which contains all the Grounds of Religion, as is before proved) and for *Impenitent sinners, and Unbelievers,* whom *God hath received,* owned as *His children,* and *Believers,* 2 Cor.6.14,15. who live *without Scandall* (which implieth regular Satisfaction for offences)

offences) who *give up themselves to God, Submit to his Government*: to lay all this upon them without Proof, is farre from the Rule of Charity. Surely, they are better Saints then those mentioned by our Brethren: *Psa.*50.5,16. Neither do these visibly *hate instruction*, in the sense there spoken of, *vers.*17. for they are charged to *consent with Thieves*, to *partake with Adulterers*, to *give their mouthes to evill*, &c. which cannot be said of these.

3. What though *Faith, Repentance and Obedience*, and that in truth, *be required of all Covenanters with God*; doth it follow, that such as being in Church-covenant want these things, or do not so clearly and fully hold forth these by a visible Profession, that all such have no right to the outward Priviledges? This indeed is the manner of their Reasoning all along; but the inconsequence thereof who doth not see, that is acquainted with the Scripture story?

Reas. 8. "*That Practice that exposeth the Blood of Christ to con-*
"*tempt, Baptism to profanation, the Church to pollution,* &c. *is not to*
"*be admitted. But the Baptizing of the children of such as are not*
"*visible Believers doth all this. Therefore it is not to be admitted.*

Ans. 1. I might grant the Argument: It doth not conclude against these whom *God hath received* as *holy*, as visible *Believers*, *Baptized into Christ*, as hath been oft proved from 1 *Cor.* 1.2. with *chap.*7.14. & 12.13. 2 *Cor.*6.14,15.

2. By this Reason, when Members received by Profession of Faith and Repentance in adult age, do decline, and appear to have as little Faith as these are supposed to have, though under no censure, such must not have their children Baptized; or else all those consequences will follow. This may suffice to Answer the Reason it self. The Proofs I shall touch afterward.

Reas. 9. "*Because these adult children, if they were not Baptized*
"*themselves, might not be Baptized in this estate, and therefore cannot*
"*intitle their seed unto it. A man must stand possessed of a right, be-*
"*fore he can make it over to another. Acts* à non habente potesta-
"tem, *are void in Law.*

Ans. This is a strange kinde of Reasoning: By supposing that a man hath not that thing which indeed he hath, and therefore he cannot convey that which he hath. Let me take away a man's Evi-

dences,

dences, and Poſſeſſion of his Lands, and it is true he cannot make a good Conveyance; but may he not then convey what he hath Evidences and Poſſeſſion of? There are ſome Members in Churches, who ſuppoſe they were not admitted, would not now be admitted; doth it therefore follow, that their children may not be Baptized? If acts of ſuch as have no right and power themſelves, are void; then acts of ſuch as have a right and power, are valid: Now theſe are Church-members, and Baptized, and therefore their conveyance of Baptiſm is valid, by this Argument. And yet it would be hard for our Brethren to prove, that theſe being Church-members ſo qualified, might not be Baptized, if they had not been Baptized.

Reaſ. 10. "*Becauſe there is but one way of Entrance into the "Church for all ſorts of perſons, which way is not here mentioned, and "this way is Chriſt*, Joh. 10. 7. *But this Propoſition holdeth forth no "perſonall Entrance by Chriſt: if they be gotten* in *ſome other way, they "are Thieves and Robbers. The danger is ſeen in him that had not on "the Wedding-garment, the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt: which being ſo "pernicious, how can the Church be blameleſs in bringing them* in *this "way?*

Anſ. Let the interpretation of *Joh.* 10. be granted at preſent; I Anſwer, That theſe children came into the Church *by Chriſt*, for they came in by the Goſpel-Covenant, as our Brethren grant from *Acts* 2. 38 39. And is not *Chriſt the Mediator of that Covenant?* Yea are they not *Baptized into Chriſt?* Are not the Blood and Benefits of Chriſt *Sealed up to them in Baptiſm?* But our Brethren ſeem wholly to forget that, or to make a Nothing of it.

2 When this Covenant (which is called *The Covenant of God in Chriſt*, Gal. 3 17) is *Solemnly owned by them, wherein they give up themſelves to God, and ſubmit to the Government of Chriſt in the Church*; Is there nothing of Chriſt in all this?

3. *The danger of wanting the Wedding-garment*, is as great to ſuch as come in with the faireſt Profeſſion of Faith, as to theſe; and is the Church blameable for admitting ſuch, becauſe their *danger is ſo great*, when ſuch want the *Wedding-garment?* But ſeeing our Brethren urge ſo much *Joh.* 10. let them conſider *ver.* 13. *The hireling*

hireling careth not for the sheep. We have more cause to fear how we shall answer for our careless Neglect of these *Lambs of Christ*, then for our Receiving them into the *Fold of Christ*, for which we have our Warrant from Christ. And withall, let us remember that weighty Charge *Heb.* 12.15,16. *Looking diligently, lest any fail of the grace of God, &c. lest there be a prophane person, as* Esau, *who for a morsell of meat sold his Birthright.* It seemeth the Apostle did think there was a *Precious Birthright*, and that it was the duty of the Church to look diligently to the preservation and improvement of it. Let us then take heed we do not take it from them, before the Rule of Christ doth require it.

By this whole Discourse, and by these *Ten Reasons*, we may now fully see upon what Principles our Brethren ground their *Anti-Synodalia*, or their *Positions* wherein they Dissent from the Synod. And therefore, seeing the Prefacer complains that *Their Tenent is laden with Reproaches of Anabaptism*, I shall crave leave (before I pass on) to present unto their serious Consideration, what Advantages they put into the hands of the Anabaptists, who, I fear, will make such use hereof as our Brethren would not willingly allow them to do. It is true, that our Brethren confess with us, *That the Covenant of God with* Abraham *and his seed, is the Gospel-covenant, and doth belong to the Faithfull and their seed,* Acts 2 38,39. But do they not with their *Distinction*, in effect, take away what they have given them? *They are Members in generall* (say they) but come to the particular, and it is onely *as wrapped up in their Parents Covenant*; they are not *actual* or *personal Members.* And that Membership in their Parents, and their Fœderal Holiness, reacheth no further then *their Minority*, pag. 37. And what Church-Ordinances are they capable of in that time, especially if that were true which some suggest, That *Ishmael came into the Church by Profession of Faith as an adult Member at thirteen years of age?* And, if at *adult age* they come not up by Profession of Faith and Grace, to Enter into personal Covenant, and so to a new Membership, *they have no right to Church-priviledges.* And may not a Convert out of Paganism, upon such terms, enjoy as much as this? And as for *Church-watch and Government*, it cannot *reach them, but by their Parents*, as it may reach an Infidel-servant: and when their

Parents be dead, and they left to the care of ſuch as are not of the Church, how ſhall it then touch them at all? And when their *Owning of the Covenant* is accounted *the Form of their Membership*; what is this, but to make a Nullity of their Covenant ſealed in Baptiſm? So that it will, I fear, ſeem to the Anabaptiſts, *That to Baptize Infants, is to ſet a Seal to a Blank, or to a Covenant of no uſe to them.* Again, when our Brethren ſo oft deny the viſible Covenant, and the Priviledges thereof, to ſuch as want the inward Grace; and affirm, *That the Covenant, and the Priviledges thereof, are limited to thoſe that with* Abraham *walk with God, whoſe heart was faithfull; who love God, and keep his commandments*, pag. 29. Will not the Anabaptiſts be ready to inferre, *Therefore Infants wanting that Grace*, &c. *have no right to the Covenant, or to Baptiſm the Priviledge of it?* Again, when our Brethren ſo oft confound the Outward and Inward Diſpenſation of the Covenant, alledging the *Scandalous ſins of Church-members in the Scripture*, to prove that theſe in queſtion are *Self-Excommunicated*, and have no intereſt in the Outward Covenant, or Priviledges thereof; Is not this a Miſtake which they will make advantage of? Laſtly, when they ſay, That the Practice of the fifth Propoſition *expoſeth the Blood of Chriſt to contempt, Baptiſm to be profaned, bringeth pollution into the Church*, &c. what are the Reaſons? *For* (ſay they) *it imparteth the Blood of the Covenant to thoſe that are not viſible Believers, ſets the Seal to a Blank, ſevereth Baptiſm from the ſtipulation of a good conſcience, bringeth the uncircumciſed in heart into the Sanctuary.* But they oft confeſs, that *Infants have no Faith, They are a carnall ſeed*, &c. And is it not a juſt fear, that the Anabaptiſts will be ready to inferre, *Therefore to baptize Infants, is to expoſe the Blood of Chriſt to contempt*, &c?

I know our Brethren will ſay, *We do not require Faith and Grace in the Infants, but in the Parents onely:* But yet when generally we ground the Baptiſm of Infants upon the Covenant of God to the Parents and their ſeed, *Gen.*17. *Acts* 2. 1 *Cor.*7. and prove they are *Diſciples, Members of the viſible Church*, and therefore to be Baptized; I wiſh our Brethren may conſider, how greatly this ground is weakned by Denial of Gods Covenant to *their Perſons*, and onely as *in their Parents*; and by making it ſo ſlight a matter, as to *wear out*

with

with their Minority, &c. And also let them consider, how suitable their Notions and Principles before-named, are to the Arguments and Grounds of Denial of Baptism to all Infants, as is easie to see in all the Books of Antipœdobaptists. These things I mention, that our Brethren may keep further off from this danger, which themselves count *a Reproach*.

I shall now proceed to consider the Answers of our Brethren to the Arguments of the Synod for the proof of the fifth Proposition.

Arg. 1. *These children are partakers of the main ground of baptizing any children whatsoever, and neither the parents nor the children do put in any barre to hinder it. This ground is the Interest in the Covenant*, Gen. 17. 7, 9, 10, 11. Acts 2. 39. Col. 2. 10, 11.

"*Ans.* They answer in general, that *Faith is the main ground of Baptism*, Rom. 4. 11. Acts 8. 37 & 19. 4.

Reply. 1. Here is no answer to the Scriptures alledged, which are very full: *Gen.* 17. 10, 11. *This is my Covenant which ye shall keep, Every Male-childe shall be circumcised: It shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you.* So *Acts* 2. 38, 39. *The Promise is to you and your children.*

2. Faith is the Condition of the Covenant; yet the outward Seal had reference to the outward Covenant it self: for *Lo*, and other Believers, could not partake of Circumcision, but by entring into that visible Covenant with *Abraham*. And our Brethren afterward do grant, That *the Church-covenant is the next ground of the dispensation of the Seals*: Now they that have the *next ground*, are supposed to have the more remote.

"Ans. 2. *More particularly*, they say, *the Covenant is not the* "*main ground of Baptism. For*, 1. *though they had* Abraham *for their* "*father*, *yet* John's *Baptism takes away that Plea*, Mat. 3. 8, 9. *and* "*calls for Repentance.*

Repl. *John* took away their vain confidence in *Abraham*'s Covenant for Righteousness and Life, as the Prophets also frequently did, *Isa.* 1. & 58. *Jer.* 7. *Mic.* 6. But he took not away the outward Priviledges of *Abraham*'s Covenant, as Circumcision, Sacrifices, &c.

2. *John* indeed calls for Repentance in a people so corrupt, to fit them for a more Gospel-dispensation, to make them *a People pre-*

pared for the Lord. But that is not the caſe of theſe in the fifth Propoſition, who are in the Goſpel-covenant, and have the Seal of Baptiſm.

" 2. *We muſt diſtinguiſh* (ſay they) *between the Covenant of* " *Grace, and the Church-covenant, which differ very much: for the* " *Covenant of Grace belongeth onely to the Elect, and true Believers,* " *which the Church cannot infallibly judge who they are. But the* " *Church-covenant* (*which is the next ground of the diſpenſation of the* " *Seal*) *requireth mutuall conſent of them that are admitted into com-* " *munion, to walk with God according to the Goſpel. The Covenant of* " *Grace is made to the children in the Parents, but is eſtabliſhed onely by* " *the reſtipulation of Faith and Repentance,* Gen. 17.7, 9. Rom. 11.20. " *Thou ſtandeſt by Faith.*

Reply. 1. I cannot ſee how theſe things can conſiſt one with another. For, if the Covenant of Grace belongeth onely *to the Elect and true Believers*; and this Covenant of Grace be *made with the childe in the Parents:* then the childe and Parents muſt be *Elect, and true Believers*; which will not be granted. Again, if the difference of the Church-covenant ſtands in this, That it *requireth mutuall conſent to walk with God*; how ſhall Infants partake of the Church-covenant and Baptiſm, whereof it is the next ground.

2. This Diſtinction, as here laid down, doth not prove the thing it was brought for, but rather yield the ſame: For, 1. It is yielded that *the Church-covenant is the next ground of Baptiſm*; and that which is the next ground and immediate, is the chief, for it ſuppoſeth the remote; and the remote grounds, without the next, could not give right to Baptiſm, and therefore this is the chief ground. Beſides, when it is ſaid, that *the Covenant of Grace is made to the childe in the Parents*, then ſtill the Covenant, even of Grace alſo, is the ground of Baptiſm. *But* (ſay they) *the eſtabliſhment is upon the reſtipulation of Faith: Thou ſtandeſt by Faith*, Rom. 11. 20. Be it ſo, in reſpect of the Covenant of Grace, and the ſaving Benefits thereof; yet the viſible Covenant, and Diſpenſation of the Ordinances, and Means of Grace, remains to ſuch in the Covenant as do continue in the viſible Profeſſion thereof, as hath been oft proved. That Faith by which the Gentile Churches ſtand, *Rom.* 11. 20. is

ſuch.

ſuch a Faith as is oppoſed to that Unbelief for which the Jews were broken off: but they were not broken off for want of holding forth poſitive Saving Faith to the judgement of Charity, but for poſitive Unbelief, whereby they obſtinately rejected Chriſt, *Rom.* 10.21. *They were a diſobedient and gainſaying people.* Acts 13.45. The Apoſtle turned from them to the Gentiles, becauſe they *contradicted and blaſphemed.* Mat. 21.42,43. The Kingdome of God was taken from them, becauſe *they rejected Chriſt the Corner ſtone:* See alſo *Acts* 18.5,6. & 19.8,9. And therefore ſo long as the Gentile Churches do profeſs Jeſus Chriſt, and his Goſpel and Ordinances, they may ſtand in the viſible Covenant, (through the patience of God) though they, or many of their Members, do not hold out ſuch a Profeſſion of Saving Faith viſibly to the judgement of Charity: otherwiſe we muſt Unchurch many ſuch Societies of Chriſtians whom the Lord hath not Unchurched, but continueth to them the Means and Ordinances of Grace.

3. I deny that there is ſuch a difference between the *Church-covenant* and that of *Grace:* for, as was ſaid in the ſecond Propoſition premiſed, *Chap.* 2. there is indeed a differing diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace in the Church, *viz. Outwardly*, in the Priviledges, Ordinances, and Means of Grace to the whole viſible Church; or *Inwardly*, in the Saving Benefits thereof to true Believers. Now that the Diſpenſation of the Covenant of God to the whole viſible Church, is the Diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace, is proved: 1. Becauſe God giveth himſelf to be the God of all the viſible Church, *Gen.* 17. *I will be thy God*; and he avoucheth them to be *His People*, and they avouch him to be *Their God*, Deut 26.17,18. Now this is the firſt and chief Benefit of the Covenant of Grace, and containeth all the reſt, as Mr *Cotton* noteth upon that Covenant. 2. Becauſe the Means of Grace and Life, and the offer of Chriſt and Grace, is given to all in the viſible Church, *Rom.* 3.1,2,3. & 9.4. 3. Becauſe all in Church-covenant ſtand bound thereby to Believe, Repent, and perform the conditions of the Covenant of Grace: and this our Brethren confeſs, that *Church-covenant requires they ſhould walk with God according to the Goſpel*; which is the Covenant of Grace. I have the more inſiſted on this Paſſage, be-

cause the right understanding hereof, is of much use to the main Question in debate.

That these in the fifth Proposition are still in Covenant, the Synod proveth, *Because they were once in Covenant, and never cut off from it.*

" *Ans.* To this our Brethren Answer, *The Lord himself discove-*
" *nants them*, Mat. 3. Joh. 8 39,40,41,42. *where the Lord takes away*
" *their Plea of the Covenant, and tells them they have the Devil for their*
" *Father.* " *And that without any act of Church-discipline*, &c. *They*
" *may reject the counsel of God against themselves, as the Pharisees,*
" Luke 7. *They may be* Felones de se, *as Mr.* Cotton *speaks*, &c.
" *There are other grounds of breaking off the Covenant, besides notorious*
" *sins, and incorrigibleness therein; as, Not standing by Faith, Not*
" *bringing forth fruit*, Mat. 3.10. *Not doing Righteousness*, 1 Joh. 3.10.

Reply. I have many things to Reply here. 1. Did the Lord himself discovenant all those out of his visible Church, spoken of *Mat.* 3 *Joh.* 8? Were their seed thereby cut off from Circumcision? Were they excluded from the Sacrifices and Temple-worship? Who can believe this? when we see the Lord Jesus so oft communicated with them in the Worship of God; when he calleth them still *The lost sheep of the house of Israel*; yea, the *children to whom Bread did belong*, Mat. 15. 24,26. These things were spoken of the Jews in general, whereof those *Mat.* 3. *Joh.* 8. were a part. They were indeed *of the Devil*, not of God, in respect of the inward state, and saving good of the Covenant; yet still in the outward Covenant, and under the Means of Grace.

2. If those *Mat.* 3. *Joh.* 8. had been discovenanted of God, doth it follow that these in question are so? Are these *A generation of Vipers, Lyars, Murtherers*, &c that live *without Scandall, Submit to the Government of Christ*, &c? If the Lawyers and Pharisees *rejected the counsel of God against themselves*, in not being Baptized of *John*; do these so, that being Baptized themselves, desire it also for their Seed, and that in such in way, by *Owning Gods Covenant, Giving up themselves to God, Submitting themselves to Discipline*, &c? If Mr. *Cotton* did count such as *Ishmael* and *Esau* Self-murtherers, doth it follow that these are such, that *take hold of the Covenant*, and that

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in some measure of truth, for ought is yet proved to the contrary?

3. I must not pass over this Rigid and Dangerous Principle, without further Examination. The Position of our Brethren is, *That God himself doth discovenant, or cast out of his visible Church, such as bring not forth good fruit*, Mat.3. *that commit sin, are Lyars*, &c. Joh.8. *and that without any act of Church-censure.* Against this I argue:

1. That these were not discovenanted of God, I proved before. And it doth appear, That the Providence of God continued them under Church-priviledges and Ordinances, at least till Gospel-Churches were erected, after the Ascension of Christ.

2. If the Lord Jesus hath ordained and commanded Church-discipline for the *saving of Offenders*, and the *Purging of his Church*, then he doth not discovenant such without Church-censures. But so it is, *Mat.*18.1 *Cor.*5. Therefore he doth it not himself without them. The reason of the Consequence is, Because if God himself did discovenant them, Church-censures were useless and vain. To what end should the Church cut off one that is already a Non-member? what have they to do with such as are *without*? why should *Corinth* be blamed for *suffering that Leaven*, if God himself had cast it out?

3. This supposed *Discovenanting by God himself*, frustrates the great and chief End of Church discipline, *viz. To heal and save the Sinner*: for, the Church having now no power over them, they must perish, being without the Means of their Recovery, except God restore them immediately; at least they are deprived of that special Means appointed and blessed of God to that end.

4. What confusion would this bring into the Church? For, how shall the Church know when God hath discovenanted this or that man? whether so soon as he hath committed such sins, or how long Gods patience will bear with him? And how shall the Church prove against any such, That God hath indeed discovenanted him? These things, and much more that might be said, may put our Brethren to finde some other meaning of *Mat.*3. *from* 8. *to* 11. *ch.* 3.10. and such like Scriptures.

Arg. 2. *The children of the Parents in question are either child-*

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of the Covenant, or ſtrangers from it, Eph.2.12. *Holy, or unclean,* 1 Cor.7.14. *within the Church, or without,* 1 Cor.5 12. *ſuch as have God for their God, or without God in the world,* Eph. 2.12. *But he that conſidereth the terms of the Propoſition, will not affirm the latter; and the former being granted, inferreth their right to Baptiſm.*

"Anſ. *The Aſſumption is denied, becauſe the children in queſtion diſ-*
"*covenant themſelves, not keeping the conditions of the Covenant; Not*
"*walking with God, Not loving God,* &c. Deut.7.9. *as they that for-*
"*ſake the Covenant of their fathers,* Deut.29.25. *And what do theſe*
"*that come not up to the conditions of it? God may caſt off for ſins of*
"*Omiſſion,* 1 Sam.15. *ſo for not believing in God.*

Reply. This being the very Hinge whereupon chiefly this Queſtion doth turn, *viz. Whether, and how theſe Church-members are cut off from their Membership in the viſible Church?* I deſire the Reader to obſerve well the Anſwer of our Brethren, and their Reaſons thereof. Sometime they ſay, *God Diſcovenanteth them*; which hath been examined: Sometime, that *They Diſcovenant themſelves*; which alſo hath been ſpoken to before. To this Refuge they now again betake themſelves. Their Reaſon here alledged I ſhall conſider, which ſtandeth thus: *Church-members which do not come up to the conditions of the Covenant,* viz. *To walk with God, Love God, keep his Commandments, Believe in God,* &c. *do Diſcovenant themſelves. But theſe Church-members deſcribed in the fifth Propoſition, do not walk with God, Love God,* &c. *Therefore they do Diſcovenant themſelves.* The Propoſition they would prove from *Gen.*17 1. *Deut.*7 9. *Pſa.*105. 8. *Deut.*29 25. To this I anſwer:

1. By denying the Propoſition. As for the Proofs, *Geneſ.*17.1. *Deut.*7.9. *Pſal.*105. Theſe Scriptures prove it is the duty of ſuch as enter into Covenant with God, to *Walk with God, To be upright, To love God,* &c. and that God performs to ſuch the Saving Benefits of the Covenant: but they do not prove, that ſimply by the neglect of theſe duties (eſpecially without *Impenitence* added) they do actually Diſcovenant themſelves out of the viſible Church and from the Privileges thereof, and the Means of Grace therein. The groſs neglect of the duties of the Covenant perſiſted in obſtinately and impenitently,

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may deſerve Cenſures: but that the want of ſuch graces, and duties of the Covenant, doth actually cut off ſuch from the viſible Church, is an Aſſertion never heard of in the Book of God, nor I think in any the beſt Reformed Church to this day. Surely *Iſhmael* and *Eſau* did not *Walk with God, Love God, Believe in God*, in our Brethrens ſenſe; yet they continued in the Church, till for their manifeſt *Profaneneſs* the one was *caſt out* by Gods appointment, and the other *rejected*, Heb.12.17. When *Deut.7.9. Moſes* ſaid, that *The Lord keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him*, &c. were there not multitudes in Iſrael that came not up to theſe duties of the Covenant, in our Brethrens ſenſe, that yet were Gods *Holy People, Royall Nation*, enjoying all Church-priviledges? and ſo all along through the ſtory of all the Scriptures. *Deut.* 29.25. renders indeed the cauſe of the great Plagues upon Iſrael, to be their *forſaking the Covenant*: But what was that *forſaking of the Covenant?* was it their not coming up to theſe terms of it, to *Walk with God, Love God, Believe in God with a viſible ſaving Faith?* Nothing leſs: but becauſe *they went and ſerved other gods, and worſhipped them*, ver. 26. As for the caſe of *Saul*, 1 Sam.15. whom *the Lord rejected from being King*, for ſo groſs a diſobedience to an expreſs and particular Command; yet we reade not that he was caſt out of the viſible Church: Nor *doth* it follow, that becauſe God *may* juſtly cut off a man from the Church for not believing, or *Sins of Omiſſion*, that therefore he doth ſo; or that therefore a Church-member, by *Sins of Omiſſion*, doth actually cut off himſelf from the viſible Church. Surely theſe are worſe then *farre-fetched and uncertain Conſequences from the Old Teſtament.*

2. For the Aſſumption of this Argument; They ſay (but without Proof) *That theſe Parents in the fifth Propoſition do not walk with God, &c. according to the condutions of the Covenant.* I anſwer, Theſe do outwardly and viſibly, at leaſt, ſo *Walk with God, Love Him, and keep His Commandments*, as the Rule of God doth account *A keeping of the viſible Covenant*: Theſe *Profeſs the Faith, are not ſcandalous in life, give up themſelves to God, ſubmit to his Rules and government*; and were not ſuch as theſe all along in the Scripture accepted as the People of God in the viſible Covenant? *Deut.* 5.

when the people professed to *Obey Moses in all things*, God saw they wanted an heart *to fear him, and keep his commandments*, yet he entred into Covenant with them. How oft are the Kings of *Judah*, that observed the Ordinances of Worship, said to *do that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and to walk in his wayes*, though they wanted that upright walking with God, and love of God, which was required? See 2 *Chron.* 11.17. 2 *Kings* 11.2. & 14.3. & 15.3,34. And, *Not to walk in the wayes of the Lord*, is charged upon them when *they walked after Baalim, In the wayes of Jeroboam*, and the like. To conclude, I would demand of our Brethren that hold this way of *Self-Excommunication, Whether any Member doth Excommunicate himself by any act that is not Excommunicable* (or *matter of Excommunication*) *by the Rule of Church-discipline?* If so, let us have a Rule for it; if not, surely these in the fifth Proposition do not Excommunicate themselves, for no Rule of Christ would allow the Church to cast them out.

" Ans. 2. *The children in question* (say they) *are in a state of Neu-*
" *trality at present: and such Christ accounts to be against him*, Mat.
" 12.30. *They are neither hot nor cold*, Rev. 3.

Reply. *Mat.* 12. 30. speaketh not of such as these, for these are *for Christ*, that *Profess the Faith of Christ*, and *Submit to his government*. That Saying of Christ, *Mark* 9.40. suits better with these, *He that is not against us, is for us*. As for *Rev.* 3. Christ calls that Luke-warm Church, *A golden Candlestick*, holds their *Stars in his Right hand*, offers to *come in*, &c. So that Christ is not so quick in discovenanting luke-warm ones, as our Brethren seem to be.

Arg. 3. *From the evil consequences of the contrary Opinion: as,*
1. *To deny the Proposition, would be to straiten the grace of Christ in the Gospel-dispensation, and to make the Church in the New Testament times, in a worse case, relating to their children successively, then were the Jews of old.*

" Ans. 1. *This doth not straiten the Gospel-dispensation, seeing it is*
" *granted to be extended to all Nations, and to both Sexes, which was*
" *not of old.*

Reply. This indeed the Anabaptists answer, but it doth not reach the case. For, such inlargement of the grace of God in Gospel-

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times, would argue rather that it ſhould be enlarged in this Point alſo, and not therefore ſtraitned here, becauſe enlarged in other reſpects. Were it Objected to a Father, That he ſtraitned his wonted favours to his children, in putting them out of the Family; and he ſhould anſwer, *Not ſo, for I have taken in many adopted children*: would this anſwer ſatisfie? Or ſhould he ſay, *Not ſo, for though I kept my Family with Pulſe before, I now give them much better fare*: would not any man ſay, So much is the greater wrong to your children, both to put them out of the Family, and deprive them of their ſhare in the better fare allowed to the Family. Juſt ſo is the caſe here.

" Anſ. 2. *This doth no more ſtraiten the grace of the Covenant, then*
" *the keeping of Baptized, eſpecially covenanting Parents from the Lords*
" *Supper, ſeeing the circumciſed Jews were not debarred from the paſſover.*

Reply. The circumciſed Jews did not partake of the Paſſover, without ſuitable legal qualifications, *viz.* A ſtate of legal purity and fitneſs to eat it to the Lord, and therefore they were to inſtruct their children in the meaning of that Service, *Exod.* 12.25,26,27. In like manner we debarre none from the Lords Supper, but for want of Goſpel qualifications.

". Anſ. 3. *Goſpel-times are in many reſpects Times of Reformation,*
"Heb. 9.10. *and therefore to build ſo much upon the largeneſs of Jewiſh*
" *practices, is a great ſin, ſeeing it is a ſtretching of the narrow way that*
" *leads to life, to be as wide as the broad way that leads moſt to deſtruction.*

Reply. 1. We build not upon Jewiſh practices Ceremonial, wherein that *Reformation* Heb. 9 10 did conſiſt, as is plain in the Text: but upon the Goſpel-covenant with *Abraham*, and that in the ſubſtantials of it, *viz. I will be thy God, and the God of thy ſeed after thee in their generations*, exemplified in the ſeed of *Abraham*.

2. It is a ſtrange ſpeech to ſay, that *This is a ſtretching of the narrow way of life, to be as broad*, &c. Surely, Gods enlargement of the Covenant to the Poſterity of *Abraham in their generations*, was an act of Gods grace, tending to bring the more to life, by giving to them the means of grace and life, and therefore was not the *broad way to deſtruction*. The *ſtraitneſs of the way to life*, doth not ſtand in reſtraining the means of grace to a few; for why then

ſhould the Lord enlarge the Goſpel to *all Nations* now, more then of old?

2d Conſequence, *To deny the Propoſition, is to render the children of the Jews, when they ſhall be converted, in a worſe condition then they were under the Legal-diſpenſation, contrary to* Jer. 30. 20. Ezek. 37. 25, 26.

" Anſ. *This is denied, any more then that they ſhould be in a worſe ſtate* " *if they ſhall not have an High-Prieſt and Temple-worſhip, when they* " *ſhall have in Chriſt a thouſand-fold more: So here is like reaſon in re-* " *ſpect of His abundant grace.*

Reply. The loſs of Shadows is nothing, ſeeing they ſhall have the Subſtance in Chriſt: but this being an eſſential Branch of Gods Covenant with *Abraham*, which is the Goſpel-covenant, it cannot be taken away without reall loſs; and the more *abundant grace*, the greater is the loſs, as was ſaid before.

" Anſ 2. *This doth no more put them into a worſer ſtate, then tranſ-* *mitting the Covenant now onely to the next ſeed, which before was tranſ-* " *mitted to remote Poſterity.*

Reply. The Covenant was all along tranſmitted by the next Parents to their ſeed in the Old Teſtament: For, ſo long as they were not caſt off by the Lord, he accounted every generation to be *His People*, even in their worſt-times. So that the tranſmitting of the Covenant and Church-priviledges, was ſtill by the next Parents; and when the Parents were broken off, their ſeed were broken off alſo, *Rom.* 11.20. So that there is no ſuch difference.

" Anſ. 3. *To the Scriptures,* (ſay they) *that in* Jer. 30. *ſpeaketh of* " *their return from* Babylon: Ezek. 37. *ſpeaketh of their Calling,* " *when they ſhall be all righteous, and nothing ſhall hinder the continuance* " *of the Covenant*, Iſa. 60. 21. Joel 3. 17, *&c.*

Reply. If *Jer.* 30. hath any reference to their return from *Babylon*, yet it appeareth to look further, even to the latter times. For *Ver.* 9. it ſpeaketh of *David their King, whom God will raiſe up to them*; and *v.* 24. of *the latter dayes*: and *Chap.* 31. 1. *At the ſame time I will be the God of all the families of Iſrael.* As for thoſe places, *Iſa.* 60. 21. *Joel* 3. that ſay, *They ſhall be all righteous, no ſtranger ſhall paſs through them*; ſo that *nothing ſhall hinder the continuance of the Covenant*: The

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Covenant then ſhall be continued, according to the Promiſe of God; to *Abrahams ſeed in their generations*, which is enough to the ſcope of this Argument. Beſides, this *continuance of the Covenant* ſhall be by *viſible Faith and Righteouſneſs*, not alwayes by *reall Faith*; for to think there ſhall be no Sin, no Hypocrites then, is groundleſs. *There is none righteous that ſinneth not*, is the general ſtate of all men in this world, till we come to Heaven. And it is evident *Ezek* 37.25. *Zech.*10.7,9. that their ſeed are part of that righteous Nation.

3[d] Conſequence. *The deniall of the Propoſition, denieth the initiatory Seal to ſuch as are regularly in the Church and Covenant, to whom the Moſaicall diſpenſation, nay the firſt Inſtitution in the Covenant of* Abraham, *appointed it to be applied*, Gen. 17. 9,10. Joh. 7. 22,23.

" Anſ. *This is a begging of the Queſtion: The children in queſtion* " *do not ſtand regularly under the Church-covenant; the contrary is plain* " Jer.9.26. Rom.2.28. Ezek.34.7 9.

Reply. The Queſtion is not begged, but the ground of the Argument is proved, *Gen.*17.9,10. *Joh.* 7.22,23. to which no anſwer is returned.

2. Seeing theſe Scriptures *Jer.*9. *Rom.*2. *Ezek.*44. and ſuch like, are ſo oft alledged, and here with ſo much confidence in the preſent caſe, I ſhall Examine them more diſtinctly.

The Queſtion is, *Whether children received into the Church, and Baptized in Infancy, and being grown up, do underſtand the Doctrine of Faith, publickly Profeſs their Aſſent thereto, are not ſcandalous in life, ſolemnly own the Covenant before the Church, wherein they give up themſelves to God, and ſubmit to the government of Chriſt in the Church; Whether* (I ſay) *ſuch do not ſtand regularly in the Church*: and, *Whether the Scriptures named do plainly prove the contrary.*

Now for the firſt, *Jer.*9.26. where the Lord threatneth to *puniſh* the circumciſed with the uncircumciſed; for, *all the houſe of Iſrael are uncircumciſed in heart.* To this I anſwer, 1. That this puniſhment was not *Diſcovenanting them*, but *the Sword.* 2. But ſuppoſe *Diſcovenanting* be included in the other; what were the cauſes thereof, by which they were proved to be *uncircumciſed in heart*, and therefore ſo to be puniſhed? They were all *Adulterers*, ver. 2. *Lyars*,

ver. 3. *Slanderers*, ver. 4. *Deceivers*, ver. 5. yea, they *walked after Baal*, ver. 14. And how then doth this place plainly prove, that the perſons deſcribed in the Propoſition *ſtand not regularly in the Church?* As for *Rom.* 2. 28. ſo oft alledged, however it may have ſome reference to the Doctrine of *Juſtification*, before ſpoken to, yet it ſeems the particular occaſion and ſcope of that diſcourſe of the *Jew* and *Gentile*, is to prove, that God diſtributeth rewards and puniſhments *without reſpect of perſons*, ver. 9, 10, 11 and to take off the Iews confidence in Legal-priviledges in that reſpect, *ver.* 13, 17, 18, 19. 20. but however, it cannot be ſpoken with any reference to Church-membership. Now in reſpect of Gods diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, *Circumciſion profited if they kept the Law*, elſe not; and in this reſpect, *the Uncircumciſion that kept the Law, was counted Circumciſion:* and ſo in this reſpect, *He is not a Jew that is one outwardly*, &c. But to infer, that every Iew that was ſo *outwardly* onely, wanting the *inward circumciſion of the heart*, was thereby diſcovenanted out of the viſible Church, this were a ſtrange Doctrine to Scripture-ears. To clear this further: 1. In what reſpect *the circumciſion is made uncircumciſion, by breaking the Law*; in the ſame reſpect *the uncircumciſion is counted for circumciſion, in them that kept the Law:* but this was never ſo accounted in reſpect of Church-membership and Priviledges; witneſs the caſe of the Centurion *Cornelius*, and his *devout Souldiers*, and others, and therefore not ſo in the former. 2. He ſpeaketh of the *inward circumciſion*, as *having its praiſe of God, not of men:* but we know the outward Circumciſion is approved of the Church, though without the inward, in reſpect of Church-ſtanding and Priviledges, and that according to Gods Rules. 3. The Apoſtle fully cleareth his meaning, *Chap.* 3. 1, 2, 3. affirming, *That the advantage of the Jew, and profit of circumciſion, was much every way*, and that *in the committing the Oracles of God to them*, which was a Church-priviledge.

Laſtly, Concerning this place, let it be noted what were the evidences of *uncircumciſed hearts* there alledged, *viz. Stealing, Adultery, Sacriledge, &c.* ver. 21, 22. which how well it ſuits to prove plainly, *That theſe in queſtion are not regularly in the Church*, let every one judge.

Concerning *Ezek.* 44. 7, 9. This place ſpeaketh of *bringing in the heathen*

heathen ſtrangers that were amongſt the children of Iſrael, as s evident, in that it is called *an Abomination* ſo to do: but to *bring in an Iſraelite circumciſed in fleſh, not in heart,* was never counted *an Abomination.* Again, he ſpeaketh of *ſtrangers uncircumciſed in heart and fleſh,* which theſe children are not. 2. Put caſe this place may by alluſion be applied to receiving of Members into the viſible Church; we agree, that none viſibly unholy ſhould be received into the Church: But our Queſtion is of ſuch *as being holy, were regularly received into the Church, and do not deſerve to be caſt out*; to which caſe this place ſpeaks nothing.

Thus we ſee how little footing there is for our Brethrens Tenent, in theſe, or any other Scriptures they have alledged; as *Jer.* 2. 21. *Amos* 9. 7. *Mat.* 3. *Joh.* 8. & 15. which have been conſidered in their place. And I am the more perſwaded that this *Way of our Brethren* is not the *Way of God,* being built upon ſo manifold miſtaken and miſapplied Scriptures; whereof many of them being Old Teſtament Proofs, it appears our Brethren make uſe not onely of *far-fetched Conſequences,* but of *plain Inconſequences from the Old Teſtament.*

4th Conſequence. *That to deny the Propoſition, is to break Gods Covenant, by denying the initiatory Seal to thoſe that are in Covenant,* Gen 17 9,10,14.

" Anſ. 1. *To refuſe to Baptize one that is not regularly in Covenant,*
" *is not to break it.* 2. *Then it is a breach like the great Sea, to deny*
" *Communion in the Lords Supper to thoſe that have laid hold upon the*
" *Covenant, and given up themſelves to God by ſolemn Profeſſion of Faith*
" *and Repentance, which is now ſtrongly pleaded for.*

Reply. 1. Whether theſe be not regularly in the Covenant, let the Reader judge by what is ſaid for it, and by the Scriptures alledged againſt it.

2. To *deny Communion in the Lords Supper to ſuch,* is not *pleaded for,* much leſs *ſtrongly*; for, *Solemn Profeſſion of Faith and Repentance* is not in the Propoſition. All that is affirmed, is, That the Church-ſeed, manifeſting their continuance in the Covenant by ſuch qualifications, if they ſhall ſtill be wanting in ability to *Examine themſelves, and diſcern the Lords body,* may be delayed till they give ſatisfaction therein.

3. Our Brethren in this caſe deal very hardly and partially with

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us, whil'ſt ſo oft they compare theſe with the moſt *ſcandalous perſons* reproved in Scripture, and with them *Diſcovenanted*, as they pretend: and yet at other times they lay it deeply to our charge, that we do not *Receive them to the Lords Table*, upon ſuch terms as are denied by them to be *ſufficient to continue them in the viſible Church.*

Arg. 4. *Theſe Parents are confederate viſible Believers in ſome degree, and therefore their children are to be Baptized.*

" Anſ. *The Parents in queſtion are not ſuch, if we ſpeak of true vi-*
" *ſible Faith, which is required* Rom. 14. 1. Mat. 12. 20.

Reply. Be it granted, that we ſpeak of true Faith viſibly in ſome degree, yet *Rom.* 14. 1. ſpeaks rather of a perſwaſion of the *lawfulneſs of eating meats unclean by the Law*, as *ver.* 2. ſheweth.

That theſe are viſible Believers *in ſome degree*; is thus proved:

Reaſ. 1. *Charity may obſerve ſundry things for it, but nothing evident againſt it.*

" Anſ. *This is ſaid* gratis, *and denied by us.*

Reply. If our Brethrens Charity could obſerve nothing for it, they might then ſhew ſomething evident againſt it, without which the Reaſon is not anſwered: for, in diſcovenanting of regular Church-members, there ought to be ſuch things evident againſt them as deſerve Church-cenſures, *Mat.* 18. 15, 16, 17.

Reaſ. 2. *Children of the faithful, qualified but as the perſons in queſtion, are ſaid to be Faithful,* Tit. 1. 6.

" Anſ. *Every one not accuſed of Riot, to be concluded to be of the*
" *Faith, is not the Apoſtles intent, nor Orthodox: Faithfulneſs is taken*
" *for Fidelity, which may be in Morall men.*

Reply. Nor do the Synod ſo conclude: There is much more in the Text, then *Not given to Riot*, viz. 1. *Children of godly Parents*: 2. *Educated in the Faith*: 3. *Not ſcandalous*, or *Not accuſed of Riot*: 4. *Not unruly, but ſubject to Government*: All which do ſuit well with the Propoſition. And this ſenſe of the word is given by Orthodox Interpreters: *Marlorat* Expounds the word *Faithfull*, of ſuch as are educated in the ſound Doctrine of Piety, and in the fear of God. *Taylor*, by *Faithfull Children*, underſtandeth ſuch as being inſtructed in the Faith, are at leaſt in external Converſation anſwerable to the Profeſſion of the Faith they make. And Reaſon would incline us

to

to conceive, that the Apoſtle would require in the children of Church-Officers ſomething of Piety, as well as of Morality. Beſides, the word πιστος here uſed, is frequently and commonly uſed in the New Teſtament, in the Synods ſenſe, *viz.* for *Chriſtian Believers*, Acts 10.45. 2 Cor.6.15. Eph 1.1. 1 Tim.6.2. & 4.3,10,12. & 5.16.

Reaſ. 3. *Children of the Covenant have frequently beginnings of grace wrought in them in younger years, as Scripture-examples and Experience ſheweth. Hence this ſort of perſons ſhewing nothing to the contrary, are in charity, or in Eccleſiaſticall reputation, viſible Believers.*

" Anſ. *It is extraordinary to have grace in Infancy, and therefore no* " *Rule for ordinary Church-proceedings.*

Reply. 1. The Synod ſpeaketh not of *Infancy*, but of *younger years*, and that is not ſo extraordinary as is objected: witneſs the hopeful ſigns of grace in many that die in minority, and the Confeſſions of divers, that hold forth ſeeds of grace ſown in their younger years. 2. We build not ordinary Church-proceedings immediately upon this ground; yet theſe being *Church-members*, we may build *Church-charity* upon this ground, that ſeeing *ſome Church-members of this ſort* have Faith in reality, *all of this ſort* may be ſo reputed in Church-charity: for ſo we judge of *adult profeſſors* in the Church; we know *ſome have grace in reality*, and therefore we judge ſo of *all that ſort*, till the contrary appear, though in the general we know *Many are called, Few choſen*: And what other ground have we of Church-proceedings with Church-members, but *Church-charity*?

Reaſ. 4. *Theſe are regularly in the Church, and therefore viſible Saints in the account of Scripture, which is the account of Truth*, 1 Cor.1.2. & 14.33.

" Anſ. 1. *The children in queſtion are not regularly in the Church, for* " *then the Parents being dead, the children ſurviving ſhould make a Church,* " *enjoy Ordinances, chuſe Officers, which is denied; and it is incredible to* " *deny them that power when their Parents are alive, and they will not be* " *long kept from putting it forth, though they may for a while.*

Reply. 1. If we may thus argue, by putting caſes, that for ought appeareth, never yet hapned in the world, *viz.* *That all the Members in*

a Church should be so taken away, that none remain but such as these children. By like reason one may prove, that women and children are not regularly in the Church: for, if all the men die, they should *make a Church, chuse Officers*, &c. *which will be denied.* Yea, thus I will prove, That this or that man is not regularly in the Church; for, if all men die but one or two, they cannot *make a Church*, &c.

2. Were the Rules of Christ observed, such a case could not fall out: For, (as Mr. *Cotton* answereth the Anabaptist in a case not unlike this) *Let there be a due watchfulness of the Church over these children to fit them for the Lords Table, and either the Lord, in the faithfulness of his Covenant, will sanctifie their hearts to prepare them for it; or else he will leave them to discover their hypocrisie and profaneness in the sight of all, to prevent the pollution of his Table, and the corruption of Discipline.* Grounds and Ends of Baptism, *pag.* 161, 163. And had we thus done, through the *Blessing of Christ*, which he hath promised upon his Ordinances, such cases could not fall out; neither had there been so much need or use of this fifth Proposition, that is now so great a matter of Dispute; and I fear this Opposition of the Dissenters will increase our Difficulties. Neither do I see so much danger of these *not being kept from putting forth a power to chuse Officers, &c.* if they were trained up under Church-discipline, as in our Brethrens Way; who acknowledge them *Church-members*, and cannot rid their hands regularly of them, without acts of Church-discipline, which yet they deny to belong to their persons immediately.

3. If such a case should fall out, it is not impossible nor absurd to say, That a people retaining the Essentials of a true Church, may fall into such a degeneracy or decay, as to be unfit for Ordinances, or to chuse Officers, untill they be further prepared by the Preaching of the Gospel unto them.

" Ans. 2. *To the Scriptures*, 1 Cor. 1. 2. & 14. 33. they say, *That by a Church of Saints primarily, the better part of Saints are understood, the rest Synecdochically, though not so in truth, yet so called.*

Reply. If all be *so called, though some be not so in truth*, then the Argument is yielded, That in Scripture & Ecclesiastical account, all *Church-members* are *Saints:* and who shall tell us which are so *in truth*, and which not, till impenitency in sin gives us cause to count them as *Heathens and Publicans?*

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Reaſ. 5. *Being in the Covenant, and Baptized, they have faith given them indefinitely in the Promiſe, and ſealed to them in Baptiſm,* Deut. 30. 6. *which continueth valid, and is a valid Teſtimony for them, whil'ſt they do not reject it.*

"Anſ. *The Promiſe is indefinite, not univerſal: whence the Argu-*
"*ment muſt be, Some circumciſed or baptized ones are Believers: But*
"*theſe in queſtion are circumciſed or baptized ones: Therefore,* &c. *or*
"*thus, The Roman Catholicks are baptized: Therefore,* &c.

Reply. 1. I ſee our Brethren can make a falſe Syllogiſm, to decline the force of an Argument that would rightly conclude. Thus; If *ſome children*, being under that *indefinite Promiſe*, be Believers (for God is true of his Promiſe) then all ſuch children are not to be rejected as unbelievers, as our Brethren would: But ſome baptized ones being under that *indefinite Promiſe*, are Believers: Therefore. Now who can ſay who are ſuch, and who are not, till they reject the grace of the Promiſe, and by impenitency in ſin are to be accounted as *Heathens and Publicans?* For, though the Promiſe of *Heart-circumciſion* being but *indefinite*, is effectually performed to *ſome* onely, not to *all*; yet they are all alike to the Church, till the difference doth ſome way openly appear. 2. To apply this to the *Roman Catholicks*, ſavours not of ingenuity: for are they the ſeed of *Confederate viſible Believers*, of whom our Diſpute is? or are they *Regularly Baptized?* or do they ſhew *nothing to the contrary*, that profeſs Popery?

"Anſ. 2. *It is not an indefinite Promiſe there, becauſe it is certainly*
"*made good to ſuch as return with their Souls,* ver. 1, 2.

Reply. This doth not hinder the indefiniteneſs of the Promiſe, but confirmeth it. And their effectual *return* to God, is the fruit of that Promiſe, and *indefinite* alſo.

"Anſ. 3. *An indefinite Promiſe doth not capacitate all children to*
receive the Seals.

Reply. Neither is ſo much affirmed; but this, with the other Conſiderations, doth render them *viſible Believers in Eccleſiaſtical reputation*, which is the ſcope of this fourth Argument.

Arg. 5. *The denial of Baptiſm to theſe, hath a dangerous tendency to Irreligion and Apoſtacy, becauſe it denieth the children of the Church to have any part in the Lord,* Joſh. 22. 24, 25, 26.

" Anſ. The Brethren deny the Conſequence, affirming. *That*
" *thirty or fourty years experience in* New-England, *through the mercy*
" *of God, ſheweth the contrary.*

Reply. This is a bare deniall, without anſwering the Reaſon from *Joſh.*22. Surely that religious generation had a deeper ſenſe of that danger, and more ſolicitous care to prevent it, then they have.

2. When our Brethren in their Preface *To the Generall Court*, take notice of the *Many, Great, and Prevailing Corruptions of Youth*, that need Reformation by Church-diſcipline, this might abate our glorying of contrary *Experience for thirty or fourty years*, in reſpect of the danger of *Irreligion and Apoſtacy* in the ſeed of the Church. But if this be ſo, it ſeemeth our Brethren do think that there are *many more* then *A few Names in* N. England, *that hold faſt the Name of Chriſt, and are ſtedfaſt in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel, and do not own ſo great an Apoſtacy of Elders and People*, as the Author of the Preface preſents to the World.

Arg. 6. *The perſons in queſtion are perſonall, immediate, and yet-continuing Members of the Church, and therefore their children are to be Baptized.*

Our Brethren here only ſpeak to the firſt Branch, concerning their *perſonal membership*, having ſpoken to the third Branch before. But the ſecond Branch about their *immediate membership* they leave untouch'd.

" Anſ. *If the meaning be, that the Promiſe to their believing Parents*
" *reacheth them, and that they are wrapped up together with them; the*
" *Aſſertion is granted, as far as concerneth the ſeed of Confederating Be-*
" *lievers in their minority: But if the meaning be, that they are Mem-*
" *bers by their own Perſonall act, then it is denied.*

Reply. This diſtinction of *Members wrapped up in their Parents*, and *Members by their own Perſonall act*, is a Riddle that no Scripture doth unfold. Let us hold to Scripture-phraſes, and the meaning will be plain and eaſie, viz. *They are Members in their own perſons, by the Lord as actuall entring into Covenant with their perſons diſtinct from their Parents, and ſetting the Seal of the Covenant upon their perſons*; as hath been proved from *Gen.*17.7,9. *Deut.*5.2,3. & 29.10,11.

Proof 1. *They are perſonally holy,* 1 Cor.7.14. *therefore Members in their own perſons.*

" Anſ.

" Anſ. *This concerns children in minority, or the ſeed of Believers and*
" *Members in full Communion, and therefore it reacheth them not when*
" *adult and grown.*

Reply. Here our Brethren ſpeak out; *That the fœderal holineſs and Church-membership of the church ſeed, weareth quite out with their infancy or minority*: though ſometime they ſpeak otherwiſe, as was noted upon their Conceſſion in their Anſwer to the Argument of the Synod, *pag.* 23. in the end. But no Scripture will prove this; yea, the whole tenour of Scripture-ſtories of the Church, convinceth the contrary. See *Deut.* 5 2,3. *Rom.* 3 1,2,3. & 9.4.

Proof 2. *They are perſonally Baptized, the Seal of Membership is applied to their own perſons, which being regularly done, is a divine teſtimony that they are in their own perſons members of the Church.*

" Anſ. *So are the Papiſts in* Rome; *and are they perſonal Members?*
" *The* Shechemites *and* Edomites *were circumciſed: there is* par ratio.

Reply. This is a very ſlight evading of the Argument, which ſpeaketh of *Baptiſm regularly done*. I had thought our Brethren did not think Baptiſm *regularly done in* Rome, or Circumciſion *regularly applied to the* Shechemites *and* Edomites: Or if not, could they ſuppoſe that there is *par ratio* a like reaſon between *Baptiſm regularly done*, and *not regularly done?* Except they ſhould mean, that *there is like reaſon between Baptiſm in* Rome, *and the Circumciſion of the* Shechemites *and* Edomites; and that is granted.

Proof 3. *They are perſonally under Diſcipline, and liable to Church-cenſures in their own perſons.* See Propoſ. 3.

" Anſ. *This is granted in the ſenſe given before; yet not ſo perſonal, as*
" *to have right to all Church-priviledges, as is confeſſed by all.*

Reply. That ſenſe given before, is confuted before. 2. If they have right to all *Church-priviledges* properly belonging to Members as ſuch, it is ſufficient. 3. Their want of *actuall enjoyment of ſame Church-priviledges*, is not for want of *right unto them*, but for want of ſuch *Qualifications* as may make them fit for *actuall enjoyment of them*, viz. *Such increaſe of Faith as is requiſite*, as Dr. *Ames* well expreſſeth it, *Medul. Lib.* 1. *Chap.* 32. *Sect.* 13.

Proof 4. *They are perſonally (by means of the Covenant) in a viſible ſtate of ſalvation. To ſay they are not Members in their own perſons,*

ſons, but in their Parents, would be as if one ſhould ſay, They are ſaved in their Parents, and not in their own perſons.

" Anſ. *It is granted they are in a ſtate of Salvation, and nearer the* " *Kingdome of Heaven then Heathens are: but they are not viſibly at* " *preſent in a ſtate of Salvation,* Mark 12. 34. *But to infer, That if* " *they be not Members in their own perſons, but in their Parents, then* " *they ſhall not be ſaved in their own perſons, but in their Parents; this* " *is utterly inconſequent: unleſs it ſhould be ſaid, that all, and onely they* " *that are Members in their own perſons, ſhall be ſaved; which were* " *ſad and Heterodox.*

Reply. To grant they are in *a ſtate of Salvation*, and yet *not viſibly ſo at preſent*, ſheweth that this Argument is greatly miſtaken. The ground of the Argument is this: It is the Priviledge of the Church (by Gods Covenant) to be the Redeemed and Saved People of the Lord: Chriſt is the Saviour of his Body the Church, *Eph.* 5.23, *&c:* Thus it is with the viſible Church viſibly: And hence ſaith Chriſt, *Salvation is of the Jews*, Joh. 4.22. And ſo ſpeaking of the *little ones*, he ſaith, *Of ſuch is the Kingdome of Heaven*, Mark 10.14. And hence the Inference is alſo much miſtaken; which is this: If their Membership (by means of the Covenant) ſetteth them in a viſible *ſtate of Salvation*, (as it doth, upon the grounds laid down) then, ſuppoſing *this Membership* be in their *Parents onely*, and not in their *own perſons*, it would follow, that this *viſible ſtate of Salvation* is in their *Parents onely*, and not in their *own perſons*: and ſo if they be ſaved according to this Covenant, it muſt be *in their Parents*, and not *in their own perſons*. And hereby it appeareth, how greatly this Opinion bereaveth the Parents of that hope and comfort they take in their dying Infants, by reaſon of *Gods Covenant made with their ſeed.*

Proof 5. *When they commit iniquity, they perſonally break the Covenant, and therefore they are perſonal members,* Jer. 11.2, 10. Eze. 16.

" Anſ. *The Covenant there ſpoken of is the Moral Law, as the Texts* " *ſhew; which any man never in, or caſt out of the Church, may break.*

Reply. Truly this Anſwer (as the reſt) is far from ſatisfying the Arguments of the Synod. The Texts alledged, expreſly call their iniquities, *A breaking of the Covenant*: and what then if the Texts ſpeak of the *Moral Law*? is not the obſervation of the Moral Law a

duty

duty of the Covenant, *viz. To have God for our God, To love him, Fear him, &c.* Or is the breach of the Moral Law, no breach of the Covenant in them that are in Covenant, becauſe others not in Covenant may break it? What ſenſe and reaſon is in this? When a Maſter chargeth his Apprentice with breach of his Covenant in Stealing his Maſters goods; ſhould he anſwer, It was no breach of Covenant, becauſe others that were never in Covenant, may be guilty of Stealing alſo? Would this anſwer prove it was no breach of Covenant? Juſt ſo is the caſe here: When the Lord chargeth the adult Members of the Church with breach of their Covenant in the Moral duties of the Covenant, to ſay, *The Covenant there ſpoken of is the Moral Law, which ſuch as were never in, or caſt out of the Church, may break.*

Our Brethren here think fit to make a ſtand; onely concluding in the words of the Presbyterian Miniſters, wherewith they would ſeem to be well ſatisfied. But the known Practice of thoſe Reverend Brethren, that do *Baptize divers Children whoſe Parents they receive not to the Lords Table*, doth perſwade me, that ſuch a Profeſſion as is deſcribed in the fifth Propoſition, would be readily accepted of by them, as a credible Profeſſion for the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm to their ſeed. And this is the more evident to me, by that which is here alledged in the ſecond Paragraph, wherein they deſcribe the perſons to be Baptized, thus: *Baptiſm is an holy Sacrament, in which a perſon profeſſing the Chriſtian Faith, or the Infant-ſeed of ſuch, is Baptized, &c.* which is fully anſwered in the fifth Propoſition.

Concerning the *Sixth Propoſition, which dependeth upon the Fifth*, our Brethren onely declare their Diſſent.

Concerning the *Seventh Propoſition*, they ſay, *It is cautelouſly penned*, and do not Object againſt it: onely deſire *Care in the Application thereof, with what Churches we have Communion.*

Concerning the *ſecond Queſtion*, About CONSOCIATION OF CHURCHES, they have declared their Conſent in all the Propoſitions laid down by the Synod, and here Object nothing.

And herein I do willingly and gladly acknowledge the ingenuity of our dear Brethren; who, though they be earneſt and quick ſometimes, in ſuch things wherein they differ, yet do freely declare their

Conſent

Conſent in other things: which giveth me the more hope, that after a fair Debate of this Queſtion, we may at length meet ſweetly in the ſame Truth, which perhaps neither of us do as yet ſo clearly apprehend, as we may (through the help of Chriſt) attain unto. *We know but in part, Believe in part, and Propheſie in part,* and are imperfect in all we do; and therefore muſt wait for, and endeavour after further diſcoveries of the minde of God.

And to this end (in caſe what hath been, and is here, or what ſhortly may be Publiſhed about this Queſtion, ſhould not clear up the Truth to ſatisfaction, but that further Replies ſhould be made) My earneſt Motion and Deſire is,

1. That all Reflections upon mens Perſons, and other impertinent Diſcourſes, being laid aſide, the main iſſue of the Queſtion in Debate may be cloſely followed; which, I perceive, is come in a manner to this narrow, *viz. Whether the Perſons deſcribed in the fifth Propoſition be regularly Church-members*; for this is all along denied by our Brethren, and ſeveral wayes alledged, whereby they ſhould become Non-members, as, *By their Self-Excommunication, By Gods Excommunication*, &c.

NB. 2. My Motion and Deſire is, That the Scriptures alone, according to their true ſenſe and ſcope, may be made the Touchſtone to diſcover the Truth: Theſe *are able to make the man of God fully furniſhed to every good work.* I deny not the uſe of the Concurring Judgement of the godly Learned: And it is well known how fully the advantage lieth on the Synods ſide in that reſpect; yet I ſee men are too apt to make uſe of Sentences of Authors that ſeem to favour their Opinion, though indeed contrary to the meaning and judgement of thoſe Authors: And this tends to amuſe and puzzle the common ſort of Readers, and enlarge Diſputes, but doth not tend to clear up the Truth. If theſe two things might be attended, I doubt not but this Caſe would have a ſpeedy and comfortable iſſue.

Now the Lord God of Truth, Purity and Peace, direct all our hearts into the Right Underſtanding, Unfeigned Love, and United Practice of his Holy Will in all things. Amen.

FINIS.

Xr. 14. 1695. F.